

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: OLD KOREAN LEGATION BUILDING:
NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION

Emma Lucier-Keller, Master of Historic
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The Korean Legation building at 1500 13th Street Northwest, Washington, D.C., once served as a nexus of early U.S. and Korean diplomacy. Nestled among buildings lining Logan Circle, the South Korean flag and a small entrance plaque are the only visible hints to the building's complex heritage. The Korean Legation building is worthy of nomination to the National Register of Historic Places because of its significance regarding the early development of international relations between the U.S. and Korea. This edifice is a remarkable, tangible link to the early history of Koreans in the U.S., given that historical discrimination and xenophobia of individuals, systems, and the state resulted in the loss of historical landscapes associated with many marginalized communities. Only within the last few decades has the preservation field begun to recognize more sites historically relevant to marginalized communities and people of color and this nomination furthers that important work.

A short essay will conclude the final project document to provide insight into the nomination research and writing process with specific emphasis on challenges and opportunities

in producing National Register nominations for sites associated with underrepresented and marginalized communities. This can also serve as a guide or resource for future students undertaking a National Register nomination for the first time.

OLD KOREAN LEGATION BUILDING: NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION

by

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Master's Final Project submitted to the Faculty of the Historic Preservation Program of the
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
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Advisory Committee:
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Chapter 1: Introduction

The Korean Legation building at 1500 13th Street Northwest, Washington, D.C., once served as a nexus of early U.S. and Korean diplomacy. Nestled among buildings lining Logan Circle, the South Korean flag and a small entrance plaque are the only visible hints to the building's complex heritage. The Korean Legation building is worthy of nomination to the National Register of Historic Places because of its significance regarding the early development of international relations between the U.S. and Korea. This edifice is a remarkable, tangible link to the early history of Koreans in the U.S., given that historical discrimination and xenophobia of individuals, systems, and the state resulted in the loss of historical landscapes associated with many marginalized communities. Only within the last few decades has the preservation field begun to recognize more sites historically relevant to marginalized communities and people of color and this nomination furthers that important work.

The development of a National Register of Historic Places nomination for the Old Korean Legation Building is part of a final project for the University of Maryland's Historic Preservation master's program. A short essay will conclude the final project document to provide insight into the nomination research and writing process with specific emphasis on challenges and opportunities in producing National Register nominations for sites associated with underrepresented and marginalized communities. This can also serve as a guide or resource for future students undertaking a National Register nomination for the first time.

A 2014 Congressional Research Service Report on historic preservation found only "8% of the then-roughly 86,000 sites included on the National Register were associated with African American, American Latino, Asian American, American Indian, and other minority

communities.”¹ As of 2020, diversity and racial justice remain one of the four leading issues in the preservation field according to the Preservation Priorities Task Force, a joint endeavor by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the National Preservation Partners Network. The other three major issues facing preservation include affordable housing, preservation trades and workforce development, and sustainability.² In order to address these issues some scholars have argued for a complete reworking of the federal preservation laws and regulations, including the National Register. Other scholars suggest that the current National Register process has already been successfully adapted to meet the challenges of recognizing and preserving the spaces and history of marginalized communities.

The crafting of a National Register nomination for the Korean Legation Building at 1500 13th Street Northwest, Washington, D.C., provides an opportunity to examine and reflect on these opposing views in terms of the preservation movement’s commitment to lifting up spaces historically associated with marginalized communities.

Research Questions

The National Register nomination for the Old Korean Legation Building was guided by the following research questions.

1. What is the historical significance of the Korean Legation Building?
2. What was the international relationship between the United States and Korea and how did the legation get established?
3. How was the Korean legation received upon arrival to the United States?
4. What is the historical integrity of the Korean Legation Building?

¹ Mark K. DeSantis, “The Federal Role in Historic Preservation: An Overview,” Congressional Research Service, Report, last modified April 7, 2020, accessed October 21, 2021, <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/misc/R45800.pdf>, 31.

² “Preservation Priorities Task Force (PPTF),” PreservationPriorities.org, accessed October 21, 2021, <https://www.preservationpriorities.org/>.

5. Who were the key figures, or can any key figures be pinned down as being associated with the Korean Legation Building?
6. What is the building's timeline? Created? Additions? Renovations?
7. Does the former owner/resident, Phelps, have any historical significance worth including in the nomination?
8. What modifications if any were made by the Korean Legation to the former residence now legation building?
9. Why is the Korean Legation Building historically relevant today?
10. Who are the different organizations and individuals with interests in the preservation of this building?
11. How might this nomination process work when the owner of the building is a foreign country?

Methodology

The nomination will be completed according to the standards outlined in the “National Register Bulletin 16A: How to Complete the National Register Registration Form” (1997), using a wide range of sources including newspaper articles, census records, plat/Sanborn/real-estate maps, deeds, equity cases, architectural guidebooks, existing research on 19th-century design, and interior photographs. Additional online resources include Ancestry, “Chronicling America,” UMD’s databases, Dig DC, and DC land records.

In addition to the research questions referenced above, the methodology for researching the Old Korean Legation Building was largely shaped by answering the two narrative sections of the National Register nomination form: architectural description and historic significance. An architectural description requires a detailed account of the exterior and interior design, style, and other characteristic defining features of the historic property. The architectural description should also mention any alterations to the structure and, if possible, indicate a reason and date as to

when the changes occurred. The research in turn was focused on the architectural history, design terminology, and establishing a timeline of the property's ownership.

For the historic significance section, the nomination must justify the choice of criteria; this requires establishing historic context and relating how the property in question played a role in that history. Research prioritized building historical context around U.S.-Korea international relations and the activities of the first permanent Korean Legation once they arrived at 1500 13th Street NW, Washington, D.C.

In Chapter 2, the principal sections of the nomination, the architectural description and historic significance narratives, are presented. Chapter 3 outlines key steps that should be considered for each stage of the nomination process and reviews the challenges faced while researching for the project. The complete National Register nomination is included as Appendix A at this end of this report.

Chapter 2: National Register Nomination: Old Korean Legation Building

Chapter 2 features the architectural description and historic significance sections of the National Register nomination for the Old Korean Legation Building. The architectural description reviews the structural and stylistic characteristics of the exterior and interior spaces. The historic significance section grounds the building in historical context for its period of significance, 1889-1905.

Architectural Description Section

Summary Paragraph

The Old Korean Legation Building is a 3 story, 3 bay, 2-pile brick Second Empire edifice characterized by its slate-covered mansard roof, English basement, and exterior end chimneys. The structure occupies a 4,102 square foot lot in which its front (east) facade runs along the west side of 13th Street NW. The building's interior was fully restored between 2015-2018 to reflect how it would have looked during its period of significance, 1889-1905. Built in 1877, the building's historical integrity is maintained through its preserved exterior appearance, nearly intact original floor plan, and current operations as a museum actively educating visitors on the history of the Old Korean Legation (Figure 1).

Full Narrative

Location/Setting



Figure 1. Old Korean Legation Building. East Elevation. 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.

The Old Korean Legation Building, located at 1500 13th Street Northwest, sits in the northwest quadrant of Logan Circle in Washington D.C. The building's front facade faces east overlooking 13th Street NW as it merges into Logan Circle. A semicircular paved walkway guides visitors toward the entrance which is shaded by a steel porte cochère on concrete pillars; it historically served as the porte cochère for carriage and wagons.³ A low black metal fence sets the boundary between the public sidewalk and the property's manicured lawn. Trees line the south and north edges of the east lawn. A one car paved driveway added post-1905, runs adjacent to the north edge of the lawn. Between 13th Street NW and P Street along Logan Circle, the Old

³ Korean Cultural Heritage Administration, *A Restoration report on the Old Korean Legation in Washington D.C.* (Korean Cultural Heritage Administration, 2019), 32.

Korean Legation is one of 11 other Victorian era buildings. Emblematic of its urban setting, the structure's west elevation abuts the neighboring residence, 14 Logan Circle. The property originally served as a single-family home until its conversion into a diplomatic building in 1889, wherein it had two functions: dwelling and office (Figure 2).

The Old Korean Legation Building is part of the Logan Circle Historic District and The Greater 14th Street Historic District. Logan Circle, part of L'Enfant's 1791 city design, was formerly known as 13th Street Circle and then Iowa Circle. The circle was renamed in 1930 to commemorate General John A. Logan. Logan Circle was paved in 1873, the same year the original owner of 1500 13th Street NW, Seth L. Phelps, bought the property. Lot 74 was part of the housing development that Logan Circle experienced between 1874 and 1887. This period

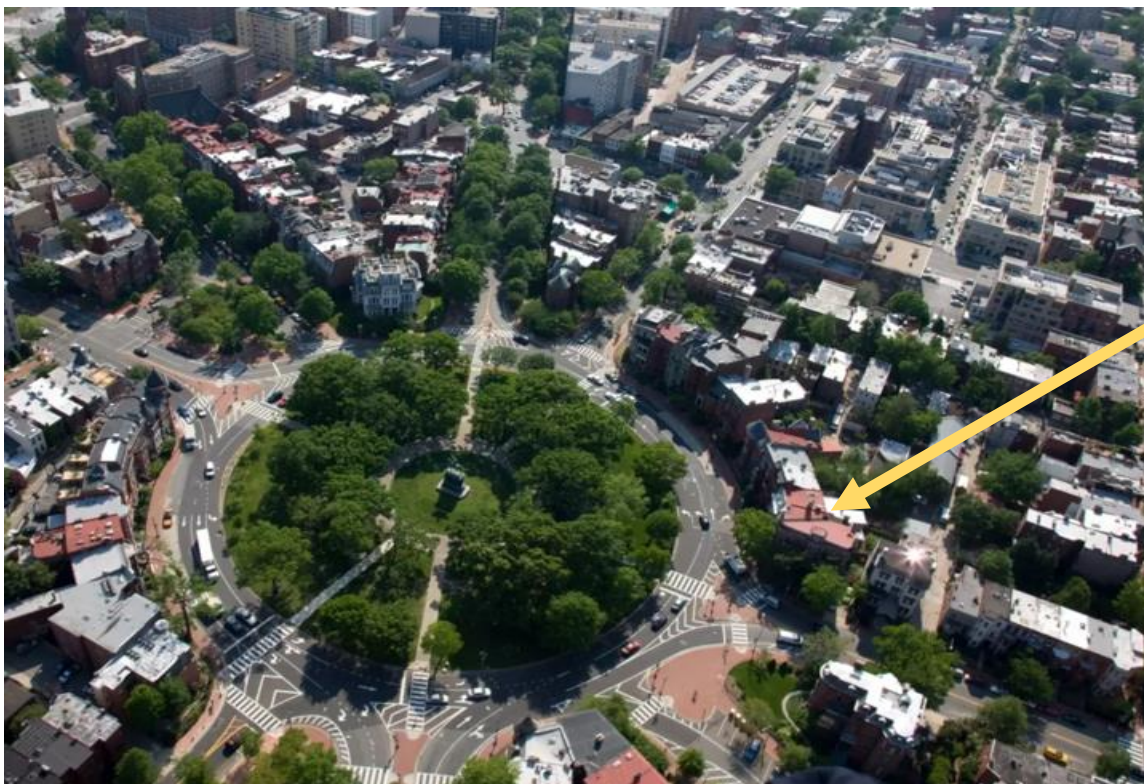


Figure 2. Aerial view of Logan Circle. Photographer: Carol M. Highsmith, date unknown. Online access: <https://www.fws.gov/media/484106>.



Figure 3. 4-8 Logan Circle Northwest. Photograph from Logan Circle Historic District National Register nomination. Photographer: Fred Figall, 1971.

coincided with the increasing popularity for romantic housing styles like Victorian Gothic, Second Empire, and Romanesque Revival.⁴ The houses constructed along Logan Circle are reflective of this trend in which nearly all are modeled after one of the aforementioned romantic styles and are 3 to 4 stories tall with brick or stone exteriors (Figure 3).

Exterior

The Old Korean Legation Building is a 3 story, 3 bay, 2 pile brick structure resting on a full English basement and designed in the Second Empire style. The short mansard roof is covered with slate and crowned with a white metal cresting that wraps around to the north and south elevations. The cresting terminates before the exterior end chimneys that rise above the

⁴ Logan Circle Community Association, D.C. Preservation League, Traceries, and D.C. Preservation Historic Division, *Greater Fourteenth Street and Logan Circle Historic Districts* (Washington D.C.: D.C. Preservation Historic Division, 1997), 5; Emily Hotaling Eig and Kim Prothro Williams, "The Greater Fourteenth Street Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Nomination, received July 15, 1994, listed November 9, 1994, accessed October 2022, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/117692146>, 9-10; Washington D.C. Deed Records, Liber 735, Folio 170.

roof line. Two interior chimneys, hidden from view along the road, peak up from the west elevation which abuts the neighboring residence, 14 Logan Circle. The structure is brick laid in 1 over 6 common bond. Ohio sandstone was used for the belt course and windowsills.

East Elevation

The front facade, or east elevation, faces 13th Street NW with symmetrical fenestration. A bracketed white cornice with a wide frieze band adds dimension along the roof line. A central tower projects from the façade with a pair of oval windows fitted into its mansard roof, a central extension of the principal roof. Extending from the front elevation are a pair of 2-story, bay windows on either side of the central tower. Paired 1-over-1 double-hung, wooden sash windows with white hooded molds and keys can be found on each story of these projected components; the only exception being the first story of the projecting tower which contains the front entry door. The noticeable beige Ohio sandstone can be found in the windowsills and belt course. Single 1-over-1 double-hung, sash windows fill each story of the north and south elevations of the bay windows. Mimicking the principal roof line, the 2-story bay windows are capped by a white bracketed cornice and short mansard roof with metal cresting. Two evenly spaced 1-over-1 double-hung, sash windows with the same hooded mold and key design are positioned on the third story above each bay window. The building is accessible via a front entrance positioned on the first floor of the central projecting tower. The door surround features a white hooded mold and key design. The paired, wood paneled, entry doors admit light in through two small lights at its top. A staircase with railing leads to the door and the steel porte cochère shades the entryway. The symbol on the Taegeukgi, or Korean flag, was incorporated into the porte cochère's gable end. Other design elements in the porte cochère include circle cutouts along the fascia and arched brackets with geometrical patterns (Figure 4).



Figure 4. Old Korean Legation Building. Porte Cochère, east elevation, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.

North Elevation

The north elevation features a three-story bay window with an exterior end chimney running up its center and extending above the roof line. On either side of the chimney, running up each story are 1-over-1 double-hung, sash windows with a hooded mold and key matching the east elevation. The mansard roof line and cornice terminate with this three-story bay window. The remaining half of the building's north elevation is a simple brick exterior with symmetrical fenestration and a thin white frieze bordering the roof line. The roof line has a small step down halfway through. For each story, there are two equally spaced, 2-over-2 double-hung, sash

windows with segmental arches. Like all the windows on this structure there is a vertical emphasis characteristic of the Italianate and Second Empire style (Figure 5).



Figure 5. Old Korean Legation Building. North Elevation, 1500 13th Street NW, Washington, D.C.

South Elevation

A 3-story bow window rounds out the corner of the building where the north and east elevation meet. The mansard roof and cornice bend with the 3-story bow window and then straightens out until abutting the neighboring structure, 14 Logan Circle. The roofline is interrupted by an exterior end chimney which runs down the center of the 3-story bow window. On either side of the chimney, running up each story are 1-over-1 double-hung, sash windows with a hooded mold and key. The straight segment of wall that continues from the 3-story bow window hosts a pair of 1-over-1 double-hung, sash windows at each story. A balcony partially conceals the windows on the second story and an enclosed greenhouse completely covers the first-floor windows. The wooden balcony and greenhouse give the impression of being one component because of their matching white paint and decorative details (Figure 6). The



Figure 6. Old Korean Legation Building. South Elevation, 1500 13th Street NW, Washington D.C.

balcony's wide fascia features the same incised geometrical design as the brackets along the principal roof and are supported on simple wood pilasters. Directly beneath the balcony is the greenhouse. Brackets with matching geometric patterns on the greenhouse exterior appear as if they are holding up the balcony. A set of four elongated 1-over-1 double-hung, sash windows fill most of the greenhouse facade and are separated by pilasters of the same design as the balcony pilasters.

English Basement

Single 1-over-1 double-hung, sash windows admit light into the legation's raised basement level. They are located directly beneath the sandstone belt course. The 2-story bay windows each contain 4 of these windows, 2 facing east and 1 for each of the north and south directions. The south elevation hosts three English basement windows: 2 below the greenhouse and 1 east of the exterior end chimney. The final four windows are in the north elevation: 2 at the base of the 3-story bay window and 2 immediately west of the bay window.

Interior

The former residence turned legation was built in a central hall plan with a stairwell along its west wall (Figure 7). Each room on the first and second floor have been decorated and staged to reflect the period of historical significance, 1889-1905 (Figure 8). The third floor which served as sleeping quarters for legation staff was converted into an exhibit space during 2015-2018 restoration work (Figure 9).

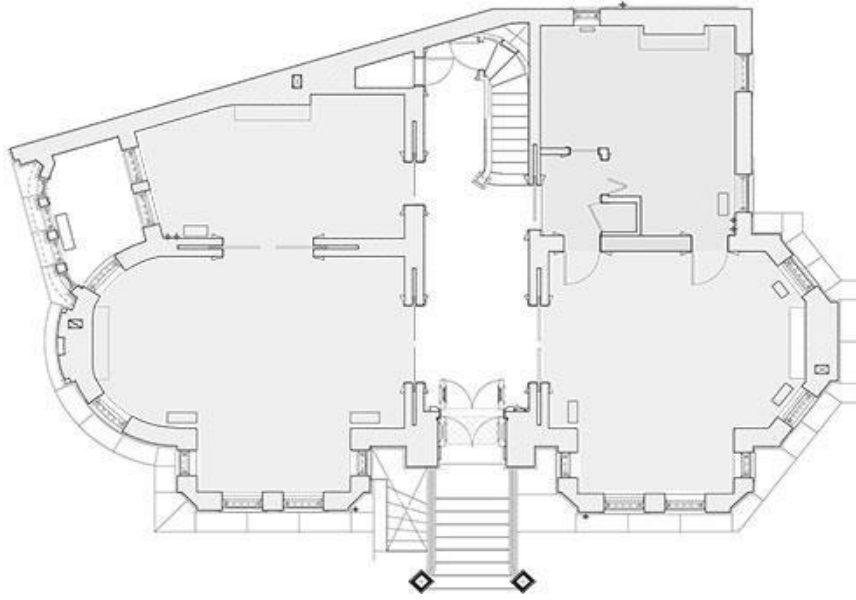


Figure 7. Old Korean Legation Building. First Floor. Looking west. Online link: <https://oldkoreanlegation.org/en/preview/introduce/#!/f2>.

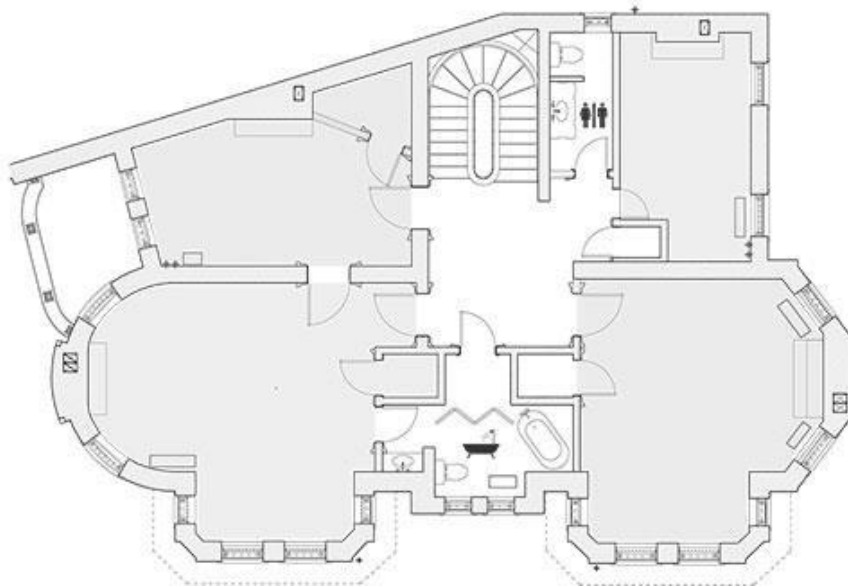


Figure 8. Old Korean Legation Building. Second Floor. Looking west. Online link: <https://oldkoreanlegation.org/en/preview/introduce/#!/f2>.

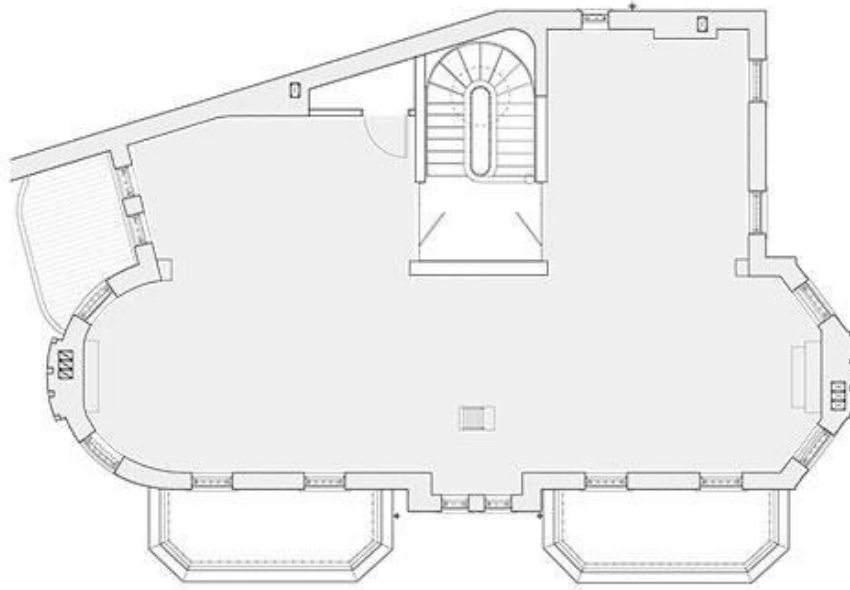


Figure 9. Old Korean Legation Building. Third Floor. Looking west. Online link: <https://oldkoreanlegation.org/en/preview/introduce/#1/f2>.

Basement

As of 1900, the basement housed the furnace room, billiard room, kitchen, water closet with a bathtub, pantry, and laundry with a fireplace. The basement has three access points: east access beneath the front door stairwell, north entry at ground level, and an interior entry via a stairwell behind the first-floor stairs. The basement now serves as an office, archive, and machine room with bathroom.⁵

⁵ Korean Cultural Heritage Administration, *A Restoration report on the Old Korean Legation in Washington D.C.* (Korean Cultural Heritage Administration, 2019), 36-39.

First floor

The Old Korean Legation, like many Victorian homes of its time, utilized its interior spaces for both private and public functions. The interior entryway is fitted with a shallow vestibule, one step below the first-floor level (Figure 10). A pair of wooden doors with stained glass in the top half and a large transom light above, divide the vestibule from the interior hall. All first-floor rooms are accessible from the central hallway. The flower designs on the hallway carpet and wallpaper introduce visitors to a floral theme that is carried through the rest of the building. Large wooden sliding pocket doors control access to all four rooms from the central hallway (Figure 11-12). Fireplaces were the primary heating source, and each room has retained its original fireplace, mantle, and marbled flooring.



Figure 10. Old Korean Legation Building. Vestibule, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.



Figure 11. Old Korean Legation Building. Pocket door. 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.



Figure 12. Old Korean Legation Building. Door hardware. 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.

The first floor consisted of a parlor or receiving room, back parlor, greenhouse, dining room, butler's pantry with a dumb waiter and sink, and a servant's water closet with a washstand and private stairwell. The back parlor served as a ceremonial room, called jeongdang. A service stairwell was built adjacent to the central hall stairs but hidden behind a shared wall. The dumb waiter was removed and the butler's pantry now serves as an orientation room for tour programming.⁶

The rooms that look east out onto 13th Street NW are gaekdang, the receiving room or front parlor, and sikdang, the dining room (Figure 13 and 14). West of the gaekdang is jeongdang, which is connected by a pair of sliding pocket doors. West of sikdang is the former butler's pantry and service closet which is connected by two single narrow wooden doors. A central staircase leads to the second and third floor.



Figure 13. Old Korean Legation Building. Front Parlor, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.

⁶ Korean Cultural Heritage Administration, *A Restoration report*, 36.



Figure 14. Old Korean Legation Building. Dining Room, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.

Second floor

Privacy increased with each level or story. The second floor consisted of two offices, a master bedroom, library, two bathrooms, and a balcony. The master bedroom sits directly above the reception or front parlor. West of the bedroom is the minister's office which is accessible through a shared wood paneled door. The office windows slide vertically up and open onto the second story balcony. A second office for staff is located across the hall from the master bedroom, directly above the sikdang. It shares its west wall with the library, which looks out onto the north yard. There are two bathrooms. The master suite has its own private entrance along the bedroom's north wall. The second bathroom shares the library's south wall (Figure 15-18).



Figure 15. Old Korean Legation Building. Master Bedroom, second story, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.



Figure 16. Old Korean Legation Building. Minister's Office, second story, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.



Figure 17. Old Korean Legation Building. Staff Legation Office, second story, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.



Figure 18. Old Korean Legation Building. Library, second story, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.

Third floor

In 1900, the third floor housed 3 rooms for legation staff and a bathroom with a washstand, spigot, and bathtub.⁷ Sometime between October 27, 1943, and December 30, 1958, when the property served as an office to the Drivers, Chauffeurs, and Helpers Local Union No. 639, the third story was renovated losing its historical form.⁸ They did, however, preserve the third story circular skylight located above the stairwell. Currently, the third level serves as an exhibit space (Figure 19).



Figure 19. Old Korean Legation Building. Exhibit, third story, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.

⁷ Korean Cultural Heritage Administration, *A Restoration report*, 36.

⁸ Korean Cultural Heritage Administration, *A Restoration report*, 32; Washington D.C.'s Deed Records, Liber 11180 Folio 533.



Figure 20. Old Korean Legation Building. Front elevation of 1500 13th ST NW, Washington

Style

The interior style of the Old Korean Legation, during its period of operation between 1889 and 1905, reflected an Eastlake influenced design popularized by the late 19th-century Aesthetic Home Art Movement. The building underwent several interior transitions over the course of its various ownerships and occupations between 1905, when the Korean Legation was forced to withdraw, and 2012, when the Korean Government officially reacquired the property. Restoration efforts to return the Legation to its period of significance relied on historic photographs (Figure 20), a 1900 repair report after an 1898 fire, and newspaper articles describing interior details of the Legation.⁹ The overall structural integrity and layout of the interior, however, was largely preserved.

⁹ Korean Cultural Heritage Administration, *A Restoration report*, 294.

The Aesthetic Movement of the late 1800s promoted the idea that art could be found in the most ordinary of household items, not exclusive to paintings and architecture. This era saw an increasing rejection for the overly stylized and called for a return to more simplified and accessible designs, like Gothic. Between 1868 and 1893, there was a household art book published for nearly every year.¹⁰ Architectural and design writers like Charles L. Eastlake, author of *Hints on Household Taste*, saw the need for literature that educated homeowners on proper house design. Interior furnishings and décor, he argued, should be functional, rectilinear, and the material identifiable even if stylized; Eastlake, like many of his peers, identified Gothic as the most suitable style to reflect these principles.¹¹ *Hints on Household Taste* was available to the English homeowner as early as 1868. Eastlake's directive on household design reached the U.S. 4 years later in 1872.¹² A year after, on October 22, 1873, Seth L. Phelps purchased lot 74 of square 241, and soon began work on his home.

Written for households with a disposable income, Eastlake's popular house guide inspired a new middle-class aesthetic. The new Gothic style was further popularized in the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial. American firms overhauled production to fit these new consumer demands. Eventually many products influenced by Eastlake and the Eastlake name came to broadly refer to oak, walnut, and ebonized furniture with spindle, chamfering, and incised geometrical decoration.¹³

¹⁰ Martha Crabill McClagherty, "Household Art: Creating the Artistic Home, 1868-1893," *Winterthur Portfolio* 18, no. 1 (1983): 2-3, accessed January 2023, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1180789>.

¹¹ Charles L. Eastlake, *Hints on household taste in furniture, upholstery, and other details* (Boston: J. R. Osgood and company, 1872), accessed February 2023, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/umn.319510021734219>, 13; Mary Jean Smith Madigan, "The Influence of Charles Locke Eastlake on American Furniture Manufacture, 1870-90," *Winterthur Portfolio* 10 (1975): 1, accessed February, 2023, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1180557>.

¹² Martha Crabill McClagherty, "Household Art: Creating the Artistic Home, 1868-1893," *Winterthur Portfolio* 18, no. 1 (1983): 3.

¹³ Joanna Banham, *Victorian Interior Design* (New York: Crescent Books, 1991), accessed February 2023, <https://archive.org/details/victorianinterio0000banh/page/174/mode/1up?q=eastlake>, 77-78.

A year after Philadelphia's Centennial Exposition and its nod to Eastlake's design ideas, Phelps began construction at 1500 13th Street NW along what was then Iowa Circle. The styles promoted by Eastlake and the 19th-century Aesthetic Movement can be seen in the exterior treatment of the Old Korean Legation Building. For example, incised into each tin molded bracket is an Eastlake inspired geometrical design (Figure 21). This geometrical pattern is repeated in the ornamentation of the second story balcony fascia and the porte cochère brackets (refer back to Figure 4).



Figure 21. Old Korean Legation. Close up of bracket design, Eastlake inspired. Looking west.

The influence of these new modern housing styles was further evident based on historic photographs and illustrations of the interior spaces at the Old Korean Legation. Photographs of the 1893 Chicago Fair's in *Demorest's Family Magazine*, which featured 13 of the 30 foreign missions in the United States, included interior shots of the Korean Legation's central hall and front parlor. Additional interior descriptions or complete room sketches were drawn from newspaper articles written between 1896 and 1900 by newspapers like *The Evening Star*, *The New York Daily Tribune*, and *The Philadelphia Times*.¹⁴ In an article published August 15, 1896, *The Evening Star* included three interior sketches of the Korean Legation's hallway, front parlor, and office while commenting on the retirement of the current "Corean" minister, Pom Kwan Soh and office while commenting on the retirement of the current "Corean" minister, Pom Kwan Soh (Figure 22).¹⁵



Figure 22. "Corea's Minister: Forthcoming Retirement of Pom Kwan Soh," *The Evening Star*, August 15, 1896.

¹⁴ Korean Cultural Heritage Administration, *A Restoration report*, 34-35.

¹⁵ "Corea's Minister: Forthcoming Retirement of Pom Kwan Soh," *The Evening Star*, August 15, 1896, accessed March 17, 2023, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/146377923/>.

Stained glass brought color and warmth to the legation's vestibule doors. A guest's first impression began at the entrance, according to 19th-century design literature, so a home should imbue a welcoming environment through the use of warm lighting.¹⁶ It was also maintained that tastefully designed interiors exercise a 3-part horizontal division through use of moldings, contrasting wall patterns, wainscoting, and cornice treatment.¹⁷ This stylistic exercise is also known as frieze-filling-dado.¹⁸ Additional design elements for a proper home included parquet hardwood flooring with dark trim, antique furniture, and lightly decorated ceilings.¹⁹ Based on the function of each room, the color palette should reflect the use and activities. For instance, acceptable colors for dining rooms were shades of red, brown, green, or terra cotta. Drawing rooms only ever looked beautiful with lighter tones to emphasize the feminine nature of its primary occupants, women. Bedrooms that received lots of sun could get away with cool tones but otherwise it was best to stick with warmer shades.²⁰

The gaekdang, or reception room for greeting guests, is the first room on the left. Set against the backdrop of a sage green floral wallpaper, mismatched antique furniture is thoughtfully arranged to mimic the 1893 interior photo from the *Demorest Family Magazine*. Portraits of the legation officers are displayed on side tables and the fireplace mantel. Following the frieze-filling-dado or 3-part horizontal emphasis, white molding and a contrasting wallpaper border partitions the wall along three horizontal layers. Dark wood trim frames the doorways and low hanging chandelier reflects light against a white marbled ceiling.

¹⁶ Martha Crabill McClaugherty, "Household Art: Creating the Artistic Home, 1868-1893," *Winterthur Portfolio* 18, no. 1 (1983): 17.

¹⁷ Martha Crabill McClaugherty, "Household Art: Creating the Artistic Home, 1868-1893," *Winterthur Portfolio* 18, no. 1 (1983): 10.

¹⁸ Joanna Banham, *Victorian Interior Design* (New York: Crescent Books, 1991), 126.

¹⁹ Martha Crabill McClaugherty, "Household Art: Creating the Artistic Home, 1868-1893," *Winterthur Portfolio* 18, no. 1 (1983): 10.

²⁰ Martha Crabill McClaugherty, "Household Art: Creating the Artistic Home, 1868-1893," *Winterthur Portfolio* 18, no. 1 (1983): 18-19.

Unlike the reception room, which was considered a female space and hence the only acceptable place for portraits and light colors, the dining room presented a more masculine feel through shades of red, brown, green, or terra cotta.²¹ Jeongdang, the ceremonial space for bowing toward the Korean palace, shared the same wallpaper as the gaekdang.

Sikdang, the dining room, was lined with red wallpaper that had a contrasting border featuring leaf and floral elements in purple, yellow, and green tones. Dark wood trim, with simply designed cabinet and table pieces grounded the room. A hearth along the north wall was hidden behind an ornamental partition but likely served as a central fixture to the room in cooler seasons.

Alterations and Restoration

May 23, 1891. | Porch extension approved for wagon and vehicles.

October 27, 1943. | Office for Drivers, Chauffeurs, and Helpers Local Union No. 639, removed partition on third floor to create a larger room.

1943-2012 | The kitchen at some point was moved from the basement to the first floor.

September 9, 1977 to October 18, 2012. | The basement configuration was changed by the owners of the time, Timothy L. and Laurretta C. Jenkins, to serve as their son's bedroom.

October 18, 2012. | Cultural Heritage Administration of Korea purchased the former Legation from the Jenkins family. A large tree was removed from the front yard because its roots were causing damage to the building.²²

2015-2018. | The porte cochère was removed at some point between 1910 and 2012. Reconstruction was made possible using an 1893 image of the former legation's front elevation picturing the porte cochère.²³ It was also learned that the architectural designer of 1500 13th ST NW, Thomas M. Plowman, also built the neighboring residence, 1502, whose porte cochère survived. This provided important design and structural clues for reconstruction. During the construction of the porte cochère the Korean flag design, or taegukgi (태극기), was included in the gable façade (Figure 23).²⁴

²¹ Martha Crabill McClaugherty, "Household Art: Creating the Artistic Home, 1868-1893," *Winterthur Portfolio* 18, no. 1 (1983): 18-19.

²² Korean Cultural Heritage Administration, *A Restoration report*, 32-36.

²³ Korean Cultural Heritage Administration, *A Restoration report*, 329.

²⁴ Korean Cultural Heritage Administration, *A Restoration report*, 44.

2018. | A Korean garden and Bullomun was added during the final year of restoration. A Bullomun, or gate of eternal youth, was installed on the property's north lawn and visitors must pass beneath to enter the garden. The stone gate symbolizes the desire that Korea-U.S. relations will not change (Figure 24).²⁵



Figure 23. 1507 13th Street NW,
Washington, D.C.

²⁵ Korean Cultural Heritage Administration, *A Restoration report*, 319.



Figure 24. Old Korean Legation Building. Bullomun Gate. Looking west.

Historic Significance Section

Statement of Significance

Summary

The Old Korean Legation Building, located at 1500 13th Street NW, Washington D.C., is individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the areas of Ethnic Heritage: Asian and Politics/Government. The former legation is historically significant for housing Korea's first permanent legation to the United States and its association with Korea's historic fight for independence from China in the 19th century and then Japan in the 20th century.

The period of significance is defined by the years the property served as the Korean Legation, 1889-1905. Korea's first permanent legation in the United States was forced to close its doors in 1905 after the Japan-Korea Treaty of 1905, also referred to as the Eulsa Treaty, in which Korea became a protectorate of Japan.

The former legation was recognized in 1972 as a contributing historic structure to the Logan Circle Historic District National Register nomination and again in the 1994 Greater Fourteenth Street Historic District nomination, which overlaps with Logan Circle.

Even though this former residence housed foreign bodies representing a diplomatic agreement as opposed to permanent Korean citizens or residents of the United States, the building serves as a symbol to Korean and Korean Americans in their long battle for recognition as a sovereign nation and independent people. This building is vital in telling their story.

The Old Korean Legation Building is also a unique example of a tangible space associated with members of a minority community because not only is it still extant, but it is also architecturally designed. Many properties connected to the histories of underrepresented groups no longer exist or are vernacular in style. To have an architecturally designed space occupied

historically by persons of color is rare in the United States and should be noted even if it is not being nominated individually under Criterion C as an exceptional example of architectural work or of a master.

Full Narrative

Criterion A: Ethnic Heritage/Asian and Politics/Government

The property's historic association and involvement in the first two decades of Korea-U.S. diplomacy qualifies it for Criterion A under the areas of Ethnic Heritage/Asian and Politics/Government.

Events in Korea leading to the Korean Legation 1866-1888

When the United States expanded their international relations to the east, they were inserting themselves into an historical timeline much older than 1776. The events which led to the establishment of a permanent Korean mission in the United States have a relatively short history but are rooted in international politics centuries old. The political nuances and entanglements between Korea, China, Japan, and Russia cannot be fully explored in this essay, but an overview of these historical relationships is provided in an effort to contextualize the importance behind Korea's U.S. legation. The following historical narrative relied on existing scholarly research from Yur-Bok Lee's *Establishment of a Korean legation in the United States, 1887-1890: a study of conflict between the Confucian world Order and modern international relations* and Mike Mansfield's essay, "American diplomatic relations with Korea (1866-1910)."
1866-1880

It is hard to imagine that any successful diplomatic agreement would emerge from U.S.-Korea interactions between 1866 and 1880. In 1866, the American steamer, General Sherman, was burned and all its crew killed during a trading expedition to Korea. The United States sent a

protest to Prince Kung, acting as the Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs, since Korea was considered a tributary of China. Prince Kung replied that Korea's tributary status to China was ceremonial, and nothing could be done on his end.²⁶ Thus, U.S. vessels were dispatched within the subsequent two years to investigate the Sherman incident but with no success.

In 1871, Mr. F. F. Low, then serving as American minister to China, was tasked with opening Korea and negotiating a treaty that would protect future shipwrecked mariners. Acknowledging the tributary status of Korea, Low sent a letter to China requesting them to notify Korea of his party and interest in treaty negotiations. China denied the request arguing that Korea was independent concerning foreign relations. Upon their arrival, Low's survey party was fired upon and Low retaliated with force resulting in the death of 250 Koreans. The U.S. party took over 5 forts and waited for a response from the Korean King but to no avail and eventually they left Korea.²⁷ These are the major events that characterize U.S.-Korean relations until 1881.

1881-1882

By 1881, the Korean empire was warming to the idea of establishing a treaty with the United States. Korea was receiving pressure along its coast from Japan and to its north from Russia. Charged with opening Korea to U.S. relations was Commodore Robert W. Shufeldt. While in China attempting to garner Chinese assistance in contacting Korea's king, Shufeldt received confirmation of Korea's interest in establishing a treaty of peace and commerce. The major component of this treaty was protection for American vessels shipwrecked in Korea.²⁸

²⁶ Mike Mansfield, "American diplomatic relations with Korea (1866-1910)" (Master's Theses, University of Montana, 1934), 3-4, accessed September, 2022, <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=5746&context=etd>.

²⁷ Mike Mansfield, "American diplomatic relations with Korea (1866-1910)" (Master's Theses, University of Montana, 1934), 10-13.

²⁸ Mike Mansfield, "American diplomatic relations with Korea (1866-1910)" (Master's Theses, University of Montana, 1934), 21-22.

During treaty negotiations, China wanted a statement recognizing Korea as a tributary of the Chinese empire. Although this statement never made it into the final version, the Korean King sent a letter to the United States President after the treaty signing, acknowledging their tributary or dependent status to China.²⁹ On May 22, 1882, the Treaty of Peace, Amity, Commerce, and Navigation was formally signed between the United States and Korea. Article II established the right for both countries to house the other's diplomatic representatives (Figure 25).

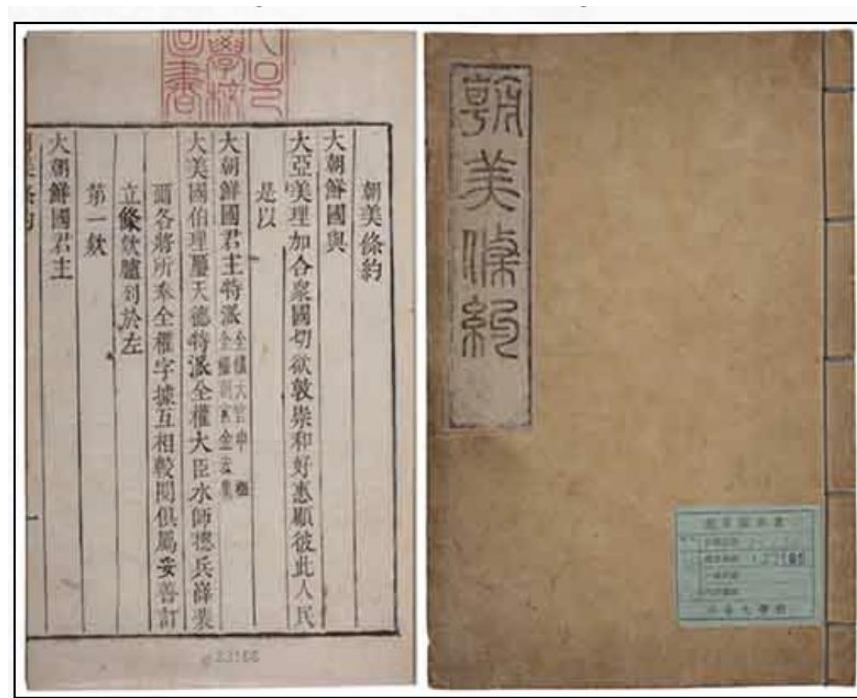


Figure 25. Treaty of Peace, Amity, Commerce, and Navigation. 1882. Signed between the United States and Kingdom of Korea (Source: Old Korean Legation).

²⁹ Mike Mansfield, "American diplomatic relations with Korea (1866-1910)" (Master's Theses, University of Montana, 1934), 25.

1887-1888

Korea sent their first permanent diplomatic envoy to the United States on November 13, 1887. The Korean mission was led by Park Chung Yang acting under the official title of envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary. He was supported by legation officials like Yi Wan-yong, who served as counciler; Yi Tsai-yon, as translator; and Secretary Yi Ha-yong and Yi Sang-jai. Additional legation staff included Kang Jin-hi, Yi Hyon-yong, Yi Jong-ha, Kim No-min, and Ho Yong-op (Figure 26).³⁰



Figure 26. Park Chung Yang. First permanent Korean Minister to the United States (Source: Old Korean Legation)

³⁰ Yur-Bok Lee, *Establishment of a Korean legation in the United States, 1887-1890: a study of conflict between the Confucian world Order and modern international relations* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois, Center for Asian Studies, 1983), <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015037364497&view=1up&seq=8>, 19.

As the 20th century approached, Washington D.C., was becoming a world stage. By 1898 it housed the representatives of several foreign nations including Belgium, Bolivia, Great Britain, China, France, Germany, Japan, Peru, Russia, and Spain.³¹ When Korea established its own foreign legation in the U.S. capital, it was exercising the same right as every other independent country before it. By joining this global theater, Korea was communicating its desire to be recognized as a sovereign nation. The Korean Legation furthered this cause by taking actions that challenged their tributary status to China.

Unable to stop Korea from sending a legation abroad, China sought new measures to maintain Korea's tributary status. China mandated that once the Korean Legation landed in D.C. they must report directly to the Chinese minister, who would then bring them to the President to announce their arrival. China also dictated that Korea's foreign mission must receive approval from China's representatives in D. C. on all future major actions. Korea ignored these directives.³² The Korean legation arrived in Washington, D.C., on January 9, 1888, and presented their credentials to United States President Grover Cleveland without the accompaniment of the Chinese minister (Figure 27).³³ When China received word that the Korean legation presented their credentials to the U.S. government without a Chinese representative, China demanded Korea punish Minister Park for his defiance. Due to ill health, Minister Park returned to Korea but instead of receiving discipline for his actions Park was promoted to Chief Advisor and later

³¹ "From Many Lands: The Members of the Diplomatic Corps in Washington," *Evening Star*, October 30, 1897, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045462/1897-10-30/ed-1/seq-19/>.

³² Mike Mansfield, "American diplomatic relations with Korea (1866-1910)" (Master's Theses, University of Montana, 1934), 42.

³³ Yur-Bok Lee, *Establishment of a Korean legation in the United States, 1887-1890: a study of conflict between the Confucian world Order and modern international relations* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois, Center for Asian Studies, 1983), 19-20.



Figure 27. Depictions of the Korean Legation presenting their credentials to President Grover Cleveland after arriving to Washington, D.C. Reported by *The Fall River Daily Herald*, January 27, 1888.

Minister of Justice and Minister of Finance.³⁴ The Korean Legation had become an important instrument in Korea's fight for recognition as an independent state.

Land

The Korean Legation was first housed at 1513 O Street, Washington, D.C. as of January 18, 1888.³⁵ That building is no longer standing and renders 1500 13th Street NW the only tangible remnant of early Korea-U.S. diplomacy. A notice, which read "[t]he Corean Legation is being moved into the new legation building, No. 1500 13th street, Iowa circle, which will be the

³⁴ Yur-Bok Lee, *Establishment of a Korean legation in the United States, 1887-1890: a study of conflict between the Confucian world Order and modern international relations* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois, Center for Asian Studies, 1983), 23-24.

³⁵ Yur-Bok Lee, *Establishment of a Korean legation in the United States, 1887-1890: a study of conflict between the Confucian world Order and modern international relations*, (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois, Center for Asian Studies, 1983), 20.

legation address hereafter,” was posted under the *Evening Star*’s Social Matters column on February 14, 1889.³⁶

The Old Korean Legation Building is located at 1500 13th Street Northwest, Washington D.C (Figure 28). The land, square 241, lot 74, which now houses the Legation was first subdivided in 1857 by developer, E. Kingman. Today’s lot 74 was originally lot 61 and purchased for \$4,437.50 on October 22, 1873, by Seth Ledyard Phelps, an American naval officer, politician, and diplomat. He owned the parcel through two more subdivisions in 1877 and 1878, the latter renumbering lot 61 to 74.³⁷

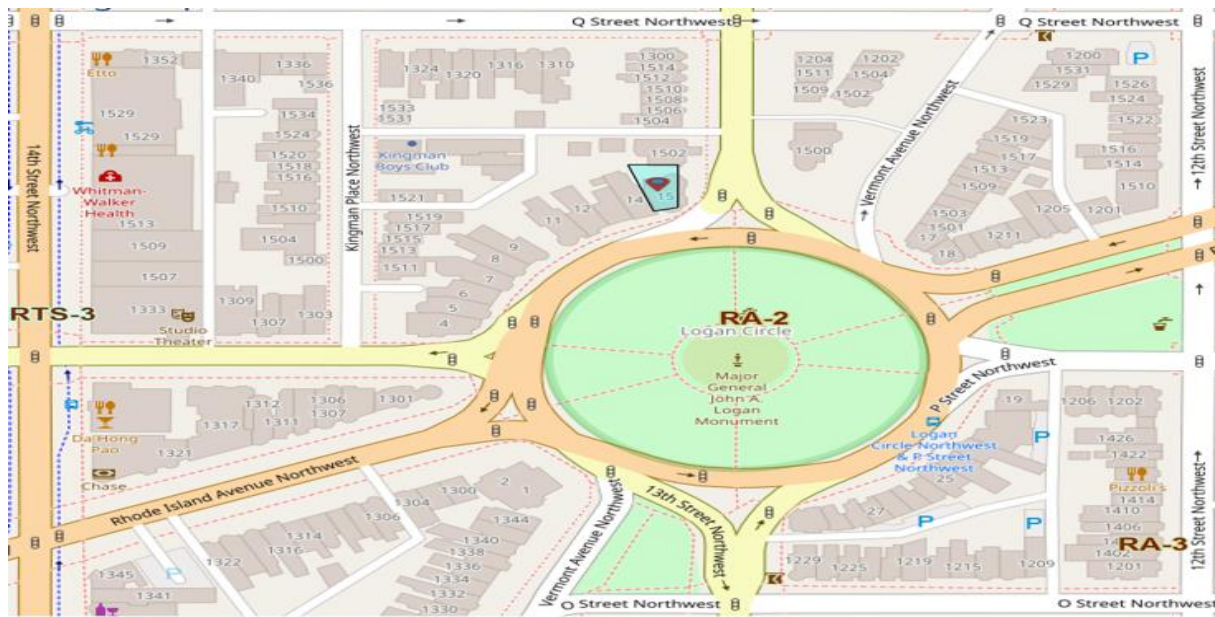


Figure 28. District of Columbia zoning map showing location of 1500 13th Street NW. Highlighted in Blue.
Online link: <https://maps.dcoz.dc.gov/zr16/#l=19&x=-8574929.468850806&y=4708846.187849175&mms=>.

³⁶ “Social Matters: What is Going on in Fashionable Society-Personal Notes,” *The Evening Star*, February 14, 1889, accessed March 2023, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/145327211/>.

³⁷ Washington D.C. Office of Surveyor Land Records, Liber B Folio 187, Liber JHK Folio 217, Liber JHK Folio 301; Washington D.C.’s Deed Records, Liber 735 Folio 170.

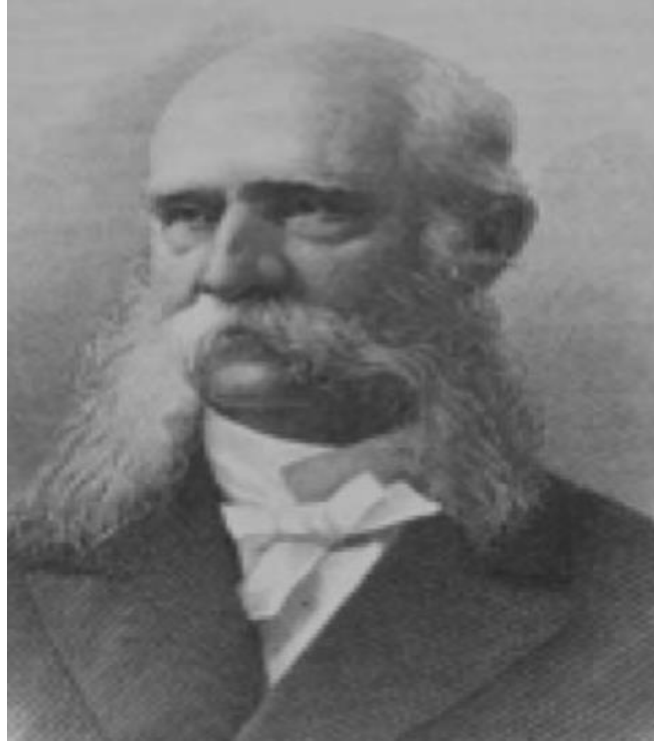


Figure 29. Seth Ledyard Phelps.
June 13, 1824 – June 24, 1885. Online access:
<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/37224690/seth-ledyard-phelps>

Seth Ledyard Phelps was the original owner of the residence built at 1500 13th Street NW (Figure 29). The home was designed by Thomas M. Plowman and built by Joseph Williams in 1877. By the 1880 census, Seth L. Phelps is recorded as living in the house with his wife, Lizzie, and 3 servants, John Hull, B. E. Thompson, and Mary Griffith.³⁸

Seth Ledyard Phelps (June 13, 1824 – June 24, 1885), began his 24-year career in the Navy in 1841 at the age of 17. His final years in the Navy were spent serving the Union side in the Civil War. After retiring from the Navy in 1865, Phelps was appointed a District

³⁸ United States of America, Bureau of the Census, *U.S. Federal Census*, Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1880, accessed September, 2023, https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/discoveryui-content/view/26881505:6742?_phsrc=eQb495&_phstart=successSource&gsfn=Seth+Ledyard&gsln=Phelps&ml_rpos=1&queryId=136ab20250637923e9053a1b9449eb12.

Commissioner in 1875 and later the United States' foreign minister to Peru. While living in Peru, Phelps passed away June 24, 1885.³⁹

Upon the death of Seth L. Phelps in 1885, the property was left to his wife, Lizzie Phelps. The will stipulated if Lizzie Phelps were to die then the property would go to their only child, Sally M. P. Brown, and her children.⁴⁰ Sally M. P. Brown was married to Sevellon Brown, who served as the Assistant Secretary of State. His office would receive Korea's first permanent legation to Washington D.C. three years later.⁴¹ It is not a coincidence then that the Korean Legation found its home at 1500 13th Street NW one year after their arrival to Washington D.C. The Phelps and Brown family rented their home to the Korean Legation from 1889 until December 1, 1891, when the Korean Kingdom officially acquired the property for \$25,000.⁴²

Events during Korean Legation, 1888-1905

1888-1895

The opening of select coastal ports to Japan in 1876 and Korea's international relations with the United States beginning in 1882 was an abrupt change for a country that historically favored isolation. This change did not go unnoticed by its people. The Treaty of Peace, Amity, Commerce and Navigation had not yet been ratified by the U.S. Senate when an insurrection led by the former king, Tai-Wen-Kun, ensued. The revolt protested Japanese occupation of Korean ports. The Japanese legation was burned down and several Japanese residents were killed.⁴³ Tai-

³⁹ "The Late Capt. S.L. Phelps," *The Evening Star*, June 25, 1885, accessed April 27, 2023, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/145274598/>.

⁴⁰ Lizzie M. Phelps v. Sally M. P. Brown and Sevellon A. Brown, et. al., Equity Case No. 13231, US District Court DC Record Group 21 (1891).

⁴¹ Yur-Bok Lee, *Establishment of a Korean legation in the United States, 1887-1890: a study of conflict between the Confucian world Order and modern international relations* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois, Center for Asian Studies, 1983), 19.

⁴² Lizzie M. Phelps v. Sally M. P. Brown and Sevellon A. Brown, et. al., Equity Case No. 13231, US District Court DC Record Group 21 (1891); Washington D.C. Deed Records, Liber 1617 Folio 495.

⁴³ Mike Mansfield, "American diplomatic relations with Korea (1866-1910)" (Master's Theses, University of Montana, 1934), 27.

Wen-Kun was eventually captured and exiled to China. Two years later, another revolt left the Japanese legation in flames again and more Japanese residents died. An attempt was also made on the life of Min-Yong-Ik, who in 1883 served alongside Hong-Yeng-Sik as Korea's first diplomatic representatives to the United States. It seemed with each revolt to remove Japanese influence from Korean land, it only served to strengthen Japan's influence. A third insurrection in 1893 led to a military standoff between China and Japan. Given the results of the previous 2 revolts, Japan sent troops to Korea, and unsure of Japan's true intent, China deployed its own military to the peninsula kingdom. Both parties refused to leave until the other did. Korea reached out to their Korean Legation in Washington, D.C. for help. Korean representative, Ye Sung Soo, forwarded along Korea's request for assistance to the U.S. government. They asked the U.S. to reach out to their own contacts stationed in China and Japan to see if any mitigation efforts could be performed.⁴⁴ Korea was drawing on Article I of their 1882 treaty with the United States which promised that if either country was treated "unjustly or oppressively," the other party to the treaty would step in and help.⁴⁵ The United States reached out to the Japanese legation to appeal on behalf of Korea.

In August of 1894, Japan and China declared war. Within a month of war breaking out Korea signed a treaty of alliance with Japan that included a stipulation recognizing Korea's independence. The Sino-Japanese War ended April 17, 1895, with a peace treaty signed between the two countries in Shimonoseki, Japan. Included in this treaty was recognition of Korea's sovereignty.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Mike Mansfield, "American diplomatic relations with Korea (1866-1910)" (Master's Theses, University of Montana, 1934), 45.

⁴⁵ Mike Mansfield, "American diplomatic relations with Korea (1866-1910)" (Master's Theses, University of Montana, 1934), 26.

⁴⁶ Mike Mansfield, "American diplomatic relations with Korea (1866-1910)" (Master's Theses, University of Montana, 1934), 48.

While the Sino-Japanese War broke out in the east, the conflict reverberated in Washington, D.C. On September 9, 1894, the Sunday edition of the *Morning News* reported on the tense interactions between the Chinese, Japanese, and Korean legations. As China and Japan jockeyed for control of Korea's peninsula, their representatives in D.C. likewise attempted to outmaneuver the other as they sought the attention of Korea's minister. The article explained "[i]f the members of the Korean legation are seen at the theater with the Chinese one night, it is reasonably certain that they will be found at another theater with the Japanese on the following evening."⁴⁷ In February of 1895, a month before Japan declared victory over China, the Korean Legation refused to adopt the upcoming Chinese calendar. This event was reported in New Jersey's *City Record*, and it marked another important example of how the Korean Legation used its global arena to their advantage. This public rejection of the Chinese calendar, which is followed by China and its dependents, communicated to all that Korea was independent.

1905

In December of 1905, the Korean Legation was forced to close its doors after signing a treaty with Japan on November 17, 1905, which gave Japan control of Korea's foreign affairs. Since the Sino-Japanese War in 1894, Japan had been closing in around Korea. Under the pretense of protecting Korea's sovereignty, Japan declared war on Russia on February 10, 1905. Japan then brokered an alliance with Korea so as to have access to Korean ports for military operations. The war ended September 5, 1905, with a treaty that specifically stipulated Russia could not interfere in any future plans Japan had for Korea.⁴⁸ Between 1905 and 1910, Japan

⁴⁷ "Three Legations: Which Attract much Attention in Washington," *The Morning News*, September 9, 1894, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86063034/1894-09-09/ed-1/seq-6/>.

⁴⁸ Mike Mansfield, "American diplomatic relations with Korea (1866-1910)" (Master's Theses, University of Montana, 1934), 61-65.

seized power over all of Korea's governing and policing infrastructure. On August 22, 1910, Japan annexed Korea.⁴⁹

The Old Korean Legation Building is associated with this important historical event. Land records tied to the property reflect Korea's transfer of real and symbolic ownership to Japan. One week after annexation, the Old Korean Legation Building was sold for \$5 to Japanese minister, Baron Yasuya Uchida on September 1, 1910.⁵⁰ That same day, Uchida turned around and sold the former legation to U.S. citizen, Horace K. Fulton, for \$10.⁵¹ It would be another 102 years before the property's ownership was returned to Korea, or what is now South Korea. The former legation was deeded to the Republic of Korea on October 18, 2012, from the then owners of the time, Laurretta C. and Timothy L. Jenkins.⁵²

⁴⁹ Mike Mansfield, "American diplomatic relations with Korea (1866-1910)" (Master's Theses, University of Montana, 1934), 73-74.

⁵⁰ Washington D.C.'s Deed Records, Liber 3358 Folio 94.

⁵¹ Washington D.C.'s Deed Records, Liber 3358 Folio 92.

⁵² Washington D.C.'s Deed Records, Liber OPR Folio 2012112987.

Title Chain: 1500 13 th Street Northwest, Washington, D.C.			
Date	Liber, Folio/Doc#	Grantor	Grantee
October 18, 2012	Liber OPR, Doc # 2012112987	Lauretta C. Jenkins and Timothy L. Jenkins	Republic of Korea
September 19, 1977	Doc # 7700029965	Robert S. Pace	Lauretta C. Jenkins and Timothy L. Jenkins
July 17, 1964	Liber 12246, Folio 338	Evelyn H. Letcher and Henry M. Letcher	Robert S. Pace
January 23, 1959	Liber 11180, Folio 533	Charles J. Bell	Evelyn H. Letcher and Henry M. Letcher
“ ”	Liber 11180, Folio 529	Lawrence J. Mills Jr./Martin F. Donoghue/ Elsie L. Leishear	Charles J. Bell
August 20, 1956	Liber 10720, Folio 588	George and Sophia Basiliko	Doris and Earl Towles
“ ”	Liber 10720, Folio 586	Elsie L. Leishear	George and Sophia Basiliko
“ ”	Liber 10720, Folio 580	Elsie L. Leishear	Lawrence J. Mills Jr./Martin F. Donoghue
“ ”	Liber 10720, Folio 573	Charles J. Bell	Elsie L. Leishear
September 1, 1910	Liber 3358, Folio 94	Baron Yasuya Uchida	Horace K. Fulton*
“ ”	Liber 3358, Folio 92	“His Majesty the present King of Chosun Ye”	Baron Yasuya Uchida
December 1, 1891	Liber 1617, Folio 495	Sevellon A. Brown/ Trustee	“His Majesty the present King of Chosun Ye”
October 22, 1873	Liber 735, Folio 170	William H. C. Bayly	Seth Ledyard Phelps

Table 1: Title Chain for the property, 1500 13th Street NW, Washington, D.C.

*Horace K. Fulton’s will devised the property to the American Security and Trust Company, which under Deed of Trust, July 6, 1943, appointed Thomas O’Brien trustee. O’Brien was later replaced by Charles J. Bell who eventually sold the property.

Integrity

The Old Korean Legation Building maintains high historic integrity through its location, setting, design, materials, feeling, and association.

Since construction in 1877, the former legation has remained a permanent fixture at the corner of Logan Circle’s northwest quadrant. Thus, the Old Korean Legation Building retains a high level of integrity of location.

The late 19th-century romantic housing styles that have been largely preserved along Logan Circle greatly contribute to the setting of 1500 13th ST NW. Logan Circle has maintained its own historical integrity as recognized by its successful listing to the National Register of Historic Places as an Historic District in 1972. In 1994, the historic nature of Logan Circle and its surrounding properties like 1500 13th ST NW, was reiterated with the National Register listing of Greater Fourteenth Street Historic District, which overlaps with the Logan Circle Historic District. The nomination was based on Criteria A and C. The continual preservation of Logan Circle reinforces the Old Korean Legation Building's integrity of setting.

The edifice's Second Empire design with Eastlake influence is well preserved. The major change to the exterior's front occurred during the Korean Legation's residency in which a porte cochère was approved in 1891 for the front façade to provide covered entrance for wagons and carriages.⁵³ The interior plan and structure of the former legation was retained after undergoing restoration between 2015-2019. The property's original design elements and structure provide a high level of integrity of design and materials.

Restoration work conducted by Korea's Cultural Heritage Administration returned the building to its period of significance as a Korean Legation, 1889-1905. Construction to restore and repair the Old Korean Legation began in 2015 and involved removing paint applied to walls post 1905, repointing failing mortar along exterior, repairing areas of roof damaged by previous water and fire exposure, and ensuring the building is up to code.⁵⁴ The third floor could not be saved, however, due to renovations in the mid-20th century when it served as headquarters for the Drivers, Chauffeurs, and Helpers Local Union No. 639. Even so, the third level still contributes

⁵³ Korean Cultural Heritage Administration, *A Restoration report*, 32.

⁵⁴ Korean Cultural Heritage Administration, *A Restoration report*, 43-44.

to the retelling of the historic space through its function as an exhibit hall. The former legation was opened to the public for tours in 2019. Restoration for interior design relied on historical documentation from newspapers, photographs, and inventory records. On April 8, 1898, a defective heater started a fire in a third story room occupied by one of the legation staff. It was found after extinguishing the fire that several important state documents, pictures, and a desk were destroyed.⁵⁵ After repairs were made an inventory book was created listing items contained in each room; this document, along with a repair report written by A. J. Fisher Co., an American builders group, provided the basis for room identification and function. Grounded in historical research, the building's exterior and interior condition conveys the feeling and association of its historic role as a Korean legation.

⁵⁵ "Fire at the Korean Legation," *The Times*, April 9, 1898, accessed October 15, 2022, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85054468/1898-04-09/ed-1/seq-10/>.

Chapter 3: Analysis and Conclusion

This chapter discusses the process and challenges associated with writing a National Register nomination for the Old Korean Legation Building. Key steps that should occur in the beginning, middle, and end of a nomination process are reviewed.

Process

Beginning

Identify a property or historic resource. Through a graduate assistantship with Dr. Michelle Magalong at the University of Maryland, the author was provided the opportunity to write a National Register nomination for the Old Korean Legation Building. This property already resides within two National Register Historic Districts: Logan Circle Historic District and Greater Fourteenth Street Historic District. When considering a property for nomination it is necessary to conduct a preliminary search through the National Register database to see if the property of interest has already been registered as an individual listing or part of a contributing feature in a larger historic district.⁵⁶ If part of a larger historic district, that information can serve as a helpful guide for further research.

Develop research questions. What do you need to know about your property? What information must be included in a National Register nomination? Use the “National Register Bulletin 16A: How to Complete the National Register Registration Form” (1997) to shape your research questions. For example, Bulletin 16A requires the historic significance section to explain the property’s historical development and timeline. The questions that must be answered therefore are how did the property come to serve its historic role and what changes did it

⁵⁶ National Register database, <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/database-research.htm>.

experience over the course of its period of significance? After reviewing Bulletin 16A, the reader should be left with a lot of questions that will help direct their research.

Begin a resource inventory and start the bibliography early. As questions are forming about what information is needed for the nomination form, another list of resources should be developing. For each question or series of questions there will be a resource(s) that can help answer it. Expanding on the same example referenced above, resources like deeds, wills, and equity cases will provide important historical data for a property's timeline. Additionally, tax assessments, building reports and permits associated with the land are helpful resources for determining changes to the property.

Middle

This part of the process is the longest because it is where the bulk of research is done and writing will start.

It may feel like two separate projects at times. The histories and research for both the architectural description and historic significance sections demand different things. The architecture description requires an understanding of architectural terminology, which is not common knowledge. This is where knowing one's resources is particularly important. There are many useful architectural guides to draw from like Virginia Savage McAlester's *A Field Guide to American Houses*. This publication is accessible for free online at archive.org and just requires users to make a free account. For architectural elements that seem unidentifiable and fail to show up in any book or guide, another option is to reach out to your local university's architecture department or, if there is one, preservation department. The architectural description for the Old Korean Legation Building relied on McAlester's guide as well as architectural and design

histories like Martha Crabill McClaugherty's article, "Household Art: Creating the Artistic Home, 1868-1893."

The historic significance section is where researchers must justify their property's historic importance. The narrative should be based around the criterion or criteria and period of significance placed on the property. Research for the Old Korean Legation Building focused on its period of significance, 1889-1905, and eligibility under Criterion A in the areas of Ethnic Heritage: Asian and Politics/Government. Essays and publications on the historical development of Korea-U.S. international relations were used along with primary records like newspaper articles.

Before beginning to write, contact your State Historic Preservation Office to ask for advice. See if they would be willing to provide a copy of a few National Register nominations that have been approved by their office. Study the writing style, format or organizational style, and key pieces of information that appear in each. For the architectural description, organize the paragraphs by exterior and interior. Subdivide the exterior section by elevation and the interior section by room function or floors. The historic significance narrative should be organized based on its criterion. For property's with more than one criterion, devote a subheading for each. Under each subheading explain why the property is eligible for that criterion.

End

Edit. Edit. Edit. Have others review the nomination form.

Imagine a stranger reading the nomination. Would it make sense to someone without any knowledge of the subject? If not, then consider rewriting.

In addition to the principal narratives, the National Register nomination requires supporting documentation in the form of maps, photographs, and geographical data. Attach to the

end of the nomination a United States Geological Survey map with your property clearly marked and photographs with a label (refer to National Register Bulletin 16A for details on labeling).

Challenges

Each nomination will have their own set of unique challenges. That is not to say, however, lessons from one nomination cannot be applied to another.

Language Barrier

- The Old Korean Legation Building naturally had many resources in Korean.

Google Translate was the solution. Other avenues were attempted like reaching out to contacts that know Korean or searching for translating services online. One report was over 300 pages, however, which would be a large ask of anyone and translating services online are costly. For the purposes of this nomination, Google Translate worked well. A great feature of Google Translate is their ability to transcribe images. Screenshots of the report were uploaded to Google Translate for translation.

Finding land records

- Each state stores their land records differently. Maryland provides digital access to plat maps, deeds, and indexes all within their mdlandrec.net. The District of Columbia requires a little more digging for land records. D.C. hosts their plat maps within SurDocs, or Surveyor Documents System, located on the District's online land records management system. The D.C. Recorder of Deeds provides online access to deeds dating back to 1921. Anything older than 1921 requires an onsite appointment with their archives. For 1500 13th Street NW, the deeds were available at the Naylor Court office. For equity cases, particularly those dating

back to the mid-19th-century, they were handled by the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia and could be found at the National Archives on Constitution Avenue, in Washington, D.C. If it is unclear where to find a property's land records reach out to your state's archive or a university's library.

Conclusion

Completing a National Register of Historic Places nomination provides experience in archive research, writing, architectural analysis, and community engagement. The lessons learned from this project will hopefully serve as a helpful resource for others struggling with writing a nomination.

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Appendix A

Appendix A contains the full version of the Old Korean Legation Building National Register of Historic Places nomination form. Along with the architecture and historic significance sections, featured already in the project final, the form also contains general identifiers (address, ownership of property, current function of property, significant dates, acreage), a verbal boundary description, authorship of form, and a USGS map.

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 PropertyHistoric name: Old Korean Legation BuildingOther names/site number: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. LocationStreet & number: 1500 13th Street NWCity or town: Logan Circle State: DC County: N/ANot For Publication:

N/A

 Vicinity:

N/A

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

I hereby certify that this ___ 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 ___ meets ___ the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

☒ **national** ___ **statewide** ___ **local**

Applicable National Register Criteria:

☒ **A** ___ **B** ___ **C** ___ **D**

Signature of certifying official/Title:**Date**

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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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

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:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

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 ☐

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Structure

☐

Object

☐

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing

Noncontributing

1

buildings

sites

structures

objects

1

Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 1

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Government/Diplomatic Building

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Recreation and Culture/Museum

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Late Victorian/ Second Empire

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick, Sandstone, Slate

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.)

Summary Paragraph

The Old Korean Legation Building is a 3 story, 3 bay, 2-pile brick Second Empire edifice characterized by its slate-covered mansard roof, English basement, and exterior end chimneys.

The structure occupies a 4,102 square foot lot in which its front (east) facade runs along the west side of 13th Street NW. The building's interior was fully restored between 2015-2018 to reflect how it would have looked during its period of significance, 1889-1905. Built in 1877, the building's historical integrity is maintained through its preserved exterior appearance, nearly intact original floor plan, and current operations as a museum actively educating visitors on the history of the Old Korean Legation (Figure 1).

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Narrative Description

Location/Setting

The Old Korean Legation Building, located at 1500 13th Street Northwest, sits in the northwest quadrant of Logan Circle in Washington D.C. The building's front facade faces east overlooking 13th Street NW as it merges into Logan Circle. A semicircular paved walkway guides visitors toward the entrance which is shaded by a steel porte cochère on concrete pillars; it historically served as the porte cochère for carriage and wagons.¹ A low black metal fence sets the boundary between the public sidewalk and the property's manicured lawn. Trees line the south and north edges of the east lawn. A one car paved driveway added post-1905, runs adjacent to the north edge of the lawn. Between 13th Street NW and P Street along Logan Circle, the Old Korean Legation is one of 11 other Victorian era buildings. Emblematic of its urban setting, the structure's west elevation abuts the neighboring residence, 14 Logan Circle. The property originally served as a single-family home until its conversion into a diplomatic building in 1889, wherein it had two functions: dwelling and office (Figure 2).

The Old Korean Legation Building is part of the Logan Circle Historic District and The Greater 14th Street Historic District. Logan Circle, part of L'Enfant's 1791 city design, was formerly known as 13th Street Circle and then Iowa Circle. The circle was renamed in 1930 to commemorate General John A. Logan. Logan Circle was paved in 1873, the same year the original owner of 1500 13th Street NW, Seth L. Phelps, bought the property. Lot 74 was part of the housing development that Logan Circle experienced between 1874 and 1887. This period

¹ Korean Cultural Heritage Administration, *A Restoration report on the Old Korean Legation in Washington D.C.* (Korean Cultural Heritage Administration, 2019), 32.

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coincided with the increasing popularity for romantic housing styles like Victorian Gothic,

Second Empire, and Romanesque Revival.² The houses constructed along Logan Circle are reflective of this trend in which nearly all are modeled after one of the aforementioned romantic styles and are 3 to 4 stories tall with brick or stone exteriors (Figure 3).

Exterior

The Old Korean Legation Building is a 3 story, 3 bay, 2 pile brick structure resting on a full English basement and designed in the Second Empire style. The short mansard roof is covered with slate and crowned with a white metal cresting that wraps around to the north and south elevations. The cresting terminates before the exterior end chimneys that rise above the roof line. Two interior chimneys, hidden from view along the road, peak up from the west elevation which abuts the neighboring residence, 14 Logan Circle. The structure is brick laid in 1 over 6 common bond. Ohio sandstone was used for the belt course and windowsills.

East Elevation

The front facade, or east elevation, faces 13th Street NW with symmetrical fenestration. A bracketed white cornice with a wide frieze band adds dimension along the roof line. A central tower projects from the façade with a pair of oval windows fitted into its mansard roof, a central extension of the principal roof. Extending from the front elevation are a pair of 2-story, bay windows on either side of the central tower. Paired 1-over-1 double-hung, wooden sash windows with white hooded molds and keys can be found on each story of these projected components; the only exception being the first story of the projecting tower which contains the front entry

² Logan Circle Community Association, D.C. Preservation League, Traceries, and D.C. Preservation Historic Division, *Greater Fourteenth Street and Logan Circle Historic Districts* (Washington D.C.: D.C. Preservation Historic Division, 1997), 5; Emily Hotaling Eig and Kim Prothro Williams, "The Greater Fourteenth Street Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Nomination, received July 15, 1994, listed November 9, 1994, accessed October 2022, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/117692146>, 9-10; Washington D.C. Deed Records, Liber 735, Folio 170.

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door. The noticeable beige Ohio sandstone can be found in the windowsills and belt course.

Single 1-over-1 double-hung, sash windows fill each story of the north and south elevations of the bay windows. Mimicking the principal roof line, the 2-story bay windows are capped by a white bracketed cornice and short mansard roof with metal cresting. Two evenly spaced 1-over-1 double-hung, sash windows with the same hooded mold and key design are positioned on the third story above each bay window. The building is accessible via a front entrance positioned on the first floor of the central projecting tower. The door surround features a white hooded mold and key design. The paired, wood paneled, entry doors admit light in through two small lights at its top. A staircase with railing leads to the door and the steel porte cochère shades the entryway. The symbol on the Taegeukgi, or Korean flag, was incorporated into the porte cochère's gable end. Other design elements in the porte cochère include circle cutouts along the fascia and arched brackets with geometrical patterns (Figure 4).

North Elevation

The north elevation features a three-story bay window with an exterior end chimney running up its center and extending above the roof line. On either side of the chimney, running up each story are 1-over-1 double-hung, sash windows with a hooded mold and key matching the east elevation. The mansard roof line and cornice terminate with this three-story bay window. The remaining half of the building's north elevation is a simple brick exterior with symmetrical fenestration and a thin white frieze bordering the roof line. The roof line has a small step down halfway through. For each story, there are two equally spaced, 2-over-2 double-hung, sash windows with segmental arches. Like all the windows on this structure there is a vertical emphasis characteristic of the Italianate and Second Empire style (Figure 5).

South Elevation

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A 3-story bow window rounds out the corner of the building where the north and east elevation meet. The mansard roof and cornice bend with the 3-story bow window and then straightens out until abutting the neighboring structure, 14 Logan Circle. The roofline is interrupted by an exterior end chimney which runs down the center of the 3-story bow window. On either side of the chimney, running up each story are 1-over-1 double-hung, sash windows with a hooded mold and key. The straight segment of wall that continues from the 3-story bow window hosts a pair of 1-over-1 double-hung, sash windows at each story. A balcony partially conceals the windows on the second story and an enclosed greenhouse completely covers the first-floor windows. The wooden balcony and greenhouse give the impression of being one component because of their matching white paint and decorative details (Figure 6). The balcony's wide fascia features the same incised geometrical design as the brackets along the principal roof and are supported on simple wood pilasters. Directly beneath the balcony is the greenhouse. Brackets with matching geometric patterns on the greenhouse exterior appear as if they are holding up the balcony. A set of four elongated 1-over-1 double-hung, sash windows fill most of the greenhouse facade and are separated by pilasters of the same design as the balcony pilasters.

English Basement

Single 1-over-1 double-hung, sash windows admit light into the legation's raised basement level. They are located directly beneath the sandstone belt course. The 2-story bay windows each contain 4 of these windows, 2 facing east and 1 for each of the north and south directions. The south elevation hosts three English basement windows: 2 below the greenhouse and 1 east of the exterior end chimney. The final four windows are in the north elevation: 2 at the base of the 3-story bay window and 2 immediately west of the bay window.

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The former residence turned legation was built in a central hall plan with a stairwell along its west wall (Figure 7). Each room on the first and second floor have been decorated and staged to reflect the period of historical significance, 1889-1905 (Figure 8). The third floor which served as sleeping quarters for legation staff was converted into an exhibit space during 2015-2018 restoration work (Figure 9).

Basement

As of 1900, the basement housed the furnace room, billiard room, kitchen, water closet with a bathtub, pantry, and laundry with a fireplace. The basement has three access points: east access beneath the front door stairwell, north entry at ground level, and an interior entry via a stairwell behind the first-floor stairs. The basement now serves as an office, archive, and machine room with bathroom.³

First floor

The Old Korean Legation, like many Victorian homes of its time, utilized its interior spaces for both private and public functions. The interior entryway is fitted with a shallow vestibule, one step below the first-floor level (Figure 10). A pair of wooden doors with stained glass in the top half and a large transom light above, divide the vestibule from the interior hall. All first-floor rooms are accessible from the central hallway. The flower designs on the hallway carpet and wallpaper introduce visitors to a floral theme that is carried through the rest of the building. Large wooden sliding pocket doors control access to all four rooms from the central

³ Korean Cultural Heritage Administration, *A Restoration report on the Old Korean Legation in Washington D.C.* (Korean Cultural Heritage Administration, 2019), 36-39.

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hallway (Figure 11-12). Fireplaces were the primary heating source, and each room has retained its original fireplace, mantle, and marbled flooring.

The first floor consisted of a parlor or receiving room, back parlor, greenhouse, dining room, butler's pantry with a dumb waiter and sink, and a servant's water closet with a washstand and private stairwell. The back parlor served as a ceremonial room, called jeongdang. A service stairwell was built adjacent to the central hall stairs but hidden behind a shared wall. The dumb waiter was removed and the butler's pantry now serves as an orientation room for tour programming.⁴

The rooms that look east out onto 13th Street NW are gaekdang, the receiving room or front parlor, and sikdang, the dining room (Figure 13 and 14). West of the gaekdang is jeongdang, which is connected by a pair of sliding pocket doors. West of sikdang is the former butler's pantry and service closet which is connected by two single narrow wooden doors. A central staircase leads to the second and third floor.

Second floor

Privacy increased with each level or story. The second floor consisted of two offices, a master bedroom, library, two bathrooms, and a balcony. The master bedroom sits directly above the reception or front parlor. West of the bedroom is the minister's office which is accessible through a shared wood paneled door. The office windows slide vertically up and open onto the second story balcony. A second office for staff is located across the hall from the master bedroom, directly above the sikdang. It shares its west wall with the library, which looks out onto the north yard. There are two bathrooms. The master suite has its own private entrance

⁴ Korean Cultural Heritage Administration, *A Restoration report*, 36.

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along the bedroom's north wall. The second bathroom shares the library's south wall (Figure 15-18).

Third floor

In 1900, the third floor housed 3 rooms for legation staff and a bathroom with a washstand, spigot, and bathtub.⁵ Sometime between October 27, 1943, and December 30, 1958, when the property served as an office to the Drivers, Chauffeurs, and Helpers Local Union No. 639, the third story was renovated losing its historical form.⁶ They did, however, preserve the third story circular skylight located above the stairwell. Currently, the third level serves as an exhibit space (Figure 19).

Style

The interior style of the Old Korean Legation, during its period of operation between 1889 and 1905, reflected an Eastlake influenced design popularized by the late 19th-century Aesthetic Home Art Movement. The building underwent several interior transitions over the course of its various ownerships and occupations between 1905, when the Korean Legation was forced to withdraw, and 2012, when the Korean Government officially reacquired the property. Restoration efforts to return the Legation to its period of significance relied on historic photographs (Figure 20), a 1900 repair report after an 1898 fire, and newspaper articles describing interior details of the Legation.⁷ The overall structural integrity and layout of the interior, however, was largely preserved.

The Aesthetic Movement of the late 1800s promoted the idea that art could be found in the most ordinary of household items, not exclusive to paintings and architecture. This era saw

⁵ Korean Cultural Heritage Administration, *A Restoration report*, 36.

⁶ Korean Cultural Heritage Administration, *A Restoration report*, 32; Washington D.C.'s Deed Records, Liber 11180 Folio 533.

⁷ Korean Cultural Heritage Administration, *A Restoration report*, 294.

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an increasing rejection for the overly stylized and called for a return to more simplified and accessible designs, like Gothic. Between 1868 and 1893, there was a household art book published for nearly every year.⁸ Architectural and design writers like Charles L. Eastlake, author of *Hints on Household Taste*, saw the need for literature that educated homeowners on proper house design. Interior furnishings and décor, he argued, should be functional, rectilinear, and the material identifiable even if stylized; Eastlake, like many of his peers, identified Gothic as the most suitable style to reflect these principles.⁹ *Hints on Household Taste* was available to the English homeowner as early as 1868. Eastlake's directive on household design reached the U.S. 4 years later in 1872.¹⁰ A year after, on October 22, 1873, Seth L. Phelps purchased lot 74 of square 241, and soon began work on his home.

Written for households with a disposable income, Eastlake's popular house guide inspired a new middle-class aesthetic. The new Gothic style was further popularized in the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial. American firms overhauled production to fit these new consumer demands. Eventually many products influenced by Eastlake and the Eastlake name came to broadly refer to oak, walnut, and ebonized furniture with spindle, chamfering, and incised geometrical decoration.¹¹

A year after Philadelphia's Centennial Exposition and its nod to Eastlake's design ideas, Phelps began construction at 1500 13th Street NW along what was then Iowa Circle. The styles

⁸ Martha Crabill McClaugherty, "Household Art: Creating the Artistic Home, 1868-1893," *Winterthur Portfolio* 18, no. 1 (1983): 2-3, accessed January 2023, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1180789>.

⁹ Charles L. Eastlake, *Hints on household taste in furniture, upholstery, and other details* (Boston: J. R. Osgood and company, 1872), accessed February 2023, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/umn.319510021734219>, 13; Mary Jean Smith Madigan, "The Influence of Charles Locke Eastlake on American Furniture Manufacture, 1870-90," *Winterthur Portfolio* 10 (1975): 1, accessed February, 2023, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1180557>.

¹⁰ Martha Crabill McClaugherty, "Household Art: Creating the Artistic Home, 1868-1893," *Winterthur Portfolio* 18, no. 1 (1983): 3.

¹¹ Joanna Banham, *Victorian Interior Design* (New York: Crescent Books, 1991), accessed February 2023, <https://archive.org/details/victorianinterio0000banh/page/174/mode/1up?q=eastlake>, 77-78.

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promoted by Eastlake and the 19th-century Aesthetic Movement can be seen in the exterior

treatment of the Old Korean Legation Building. For example, incised into each tin molded bracket is an Eastlake inspired geometrical design (Figure 21). This geometrical pattern is repeated in the ornamentation of the second story balcony fascia and the porte cochère brackets (refer back to Figure 4).

The influence of these new modern housing styles was further evident based on historic photographs and illustrations of the interior spaces at the Old Korean Legation. Photographs of the 1893 Chicago Fair's in *Demorest's Family Magazine*, which featured 13 of the 30 foreign missions in the United States, included interior shots of the Korean Legation's central hall and front parlor. Additional interior descriptions or complete room sketches were drawn from newspaper articles written between 1896 and 1900 by newspapers like *The Evening Star*, *The New York Daily Tribune*, and *The Philadelphia Times*.¹² In an article published August 15, 1896, *The Evening Star* included three interior sketches of the Korean Legation's hallway, front parlor, and office while commenting on the retirement of the current "Corean" minister, Pom Kwan Soh (Figure 22).¹³

Stained glass brought color and warmth to the legation's vestibule doors. A guest's first impression began at the entrance, according to 19th-century design literature, so a home should imbue a welcoming environment through the use of warm lighting.¹⁴ It was also maintained that tastefully designed interiors exercise a 3-part horizontal division through use of moldings,

¹² Korean Cultural Heritage Administration, *A Restoration report*, 34-35.

¹³ "Corea's Minister: Forthcoming Retirement of Pom Kwan Soh," *The Evening Star*, August 15, 1896, accessed March 17, 2023, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/146377923/>.

¹⁴ Martha Crabill McClagherty, "Household Art: Creating the Artistic Home, 1868-1893," *Winterthur Portfolio* 18, no. 1 (1983): 17.

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contrasting wall patterns, wainscoting, and cornice treatment.¹⁵ This stylistic exercise is also

known as frieze-filling-dado.¹⁶ Additional design elements for a proper home included parquet hardwood flooring with dark trim, antique furniture, and lightly decorated ceilings.¹⁷ Based on the function of each room, the color palette should reflect the use and activities. For instance, acceptable colors for dining rooms were shades of red, brown, green, or terra cotta. Drawing rooms only ever looked beautiful with lighter tones to emphasize the feminine nature of its primary occupants, women. Bedrooms that received lots of sun could get away with cool tones but otherwise it was best to stick with warmer shades.¹⁸

The gaekdang, or reception room for greeting guests, is the first room on the left. Set against the backdrop of a sage green floral wallpaper, mismatched antique furniture is thoughtfully arranged to mimic the 1893 interior photo from the *Demorest Family Magazine*. Portraits of the legation officers are displayed on side tables and the fireplace mantel. Following the frieze-filling-dado or 3-part horizontal emphasis, white molding and a contrasting wallpaper border partitions the wall along three horizontal layers. Dark wood trim frames the doorways and low hanging chandelier reflects light against a white marbled ceiling.

Unlike the reception room, which was considered a female space and hence the only acceptable place for portraits and light colors, the dining room presented a more masculine feel

¹⁵ Martha Crabill McClaugherty, "Household Art: Creating the Artistic Home, 1868-1893," *Winterthur Portfolio* 18, no. 1 (1983): 10.

¹⁶ Joanna Banham, *Victorian Interior Design* (New York: Crescent Books, 1991), 126.

¹⁷ Martha Crabill McClaugherty, "Household Art: Creating the Artistic Home, 1868-1893," *Winterthur Portfolio* 18, no. 1 (1983): 10.

¹⁸ Martha Crabill McClaugherty, "Household Art: Creating the Artistic Home, 1868-1893," *Winterthur Portfolio* 18, no. 1 (1983): 18-19.

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through shades of red, brown, green, or terra cotta.¹⁹ Jeongdang, the ceremonial space for

bowing toward the Korean palace, shared the same wallpaper as the gaekdang.

Sikdang, the dining room, was lined with red wallpaper that had a contrasting border featuring leaf and floral elements in purple, yellow, and green tones. Dark wood trim, with simply designed cabinet and table pieces grounded the room. A hearth along the north wall was hidden behind an ornamental partition but likely served as a central fixture to the room in cooler seasons.

Alterations and Restoration

May 23, 1891. | Porch extension approved for wagon and vehicles.

October 27, 1943. | Office for Drivers, Chauffeurs, and Helpers Local Union No. 639, removed partition on third floor to create a larger room.

1943-2012 | The kitchen at some point was moved from the basement to the first floor.

September 9, 1977 to October 18, 2012. | The basement configuration was changed by the owners of the time, Timothy L. and Laurretta C. Jenkins, to serve as their son's bedroom.

October 18, 2012. | Cultural Heritage Administration of Korea purchased the former Legation from the Jenkins family. A large tree was removed from the front yard because its roots were causing damage to the building.²⁰

2015-2018. | The porte cochère was removed at some point between 1910 and 2012. Reconstruction was made possible using an 1893 image of the former legation's front elevation picturing the porte cochère.²¹ It was also learned that the architectural designer of 1500 13th ST NW, Thomas M. Plowman, also built the neighboring residence, 1502, whose porte cochère survived. This provided important design and structural clues for reconstruction. During the construction of the porte cochère the Korean flag design, or taegeukgi (태극기), was included in the gable façade (Figure 23).²²

2018. | A Korean garden and Bullomun was added during the final year of restoration. A Bullomun, or gate of eternal youth, was installed on the property's north lawn and visitors must

¹⁹ Martha Crabill McClagherty, "Household Art: Creating the Artistic Home, 1868-1893," *Winterthur Portfolio* 18, no. 1 (1983): 18-19.

²⁰ Korean Cultural Heritage Administration, *A Restoration report*, 32-36.

²¹ Korean Cultural Heritage Administration, *A Restoration report*, 329.

²² Korean Cultural Heritage Administration, *A Restoration report*, 44.

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past beneath to enter the garden. The stone gate symbolizes the desire that Korea-U.S. relations will not change (Figure 24).²³

²³ Korean Cultural Heritage Administration, *A Restoration report*, 319.

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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.)

Ethnic Heritage/Asian

Politics/Government

Period of Significance

1889-1905

1889-1891

Significant Dates

1889

1877

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Plowman, Thomas M (Designer/Architect)

Williams, Joseph (Builder)

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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 Old Korean Legation Building, located at 1500 13th Street NW, Washington D.C., is individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the areas of Ethnic Heritage: Asian and Politics/Government. The former legation is historically significant for housing Korea's first permanent legation to the United States and its association with Korea's historic fight for independence from China in the 19th century and then Japan in the 20th century.

The period of significance is defined by the years the property served as the Korean Legation, 1889-1905. Korea's first permanent legation in the United States was forced to close its doors in 1905 after the Japan-Korea Treaty of 1905, also referred to as the Eulsa Treaty, in which Korea became a protectorate of Japan.

The former legation was recognized in 1972 as a contributing historic structure to the Logan Circle Historic District National Register nomination and again in the 1994 Greater Fourteenth Street Historic District nomination, which overlaps with Logan Circle.

Even though this former residence housed foreign bodies representing a diplomatic agreement as opposed to permanent Korean citizens or residents of the United States, the building serves as a symbol to Korean and Korean Americans in their long battle for recognition as a sovereign nation and independent people. This building is vital in telling their story.

The Old Korean Legation Building is also a unique example of a tangible space associated with members of a minority community because not only is it still extant, but it is also architecturally designed. Many properties connected to the histories of underrepresented groups

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no longer exist or are vernacular in style. To have an architecturally designed space occupied

historically by persons of color is rare in the United States and should be noted even if it is not being nominated individually under Criterion C as an exceptional example of architectural work or of a master.

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

Criterion A: Ethnic Heritage/Asian and Politics/Government

The property's historic association and involvement in the first two decades of Korea-U.S. diplomacy qualifies it for Criterion A under the areas of Ethnic Heritage/Asian and Politics/Government.

Events in Korea leading to the Korean Legation 1866-1888

When the United States expanded their international relations to the east, they were inserting themselves into an historical timeline much older than 1776. The events which led to the establishment of a permanent Korean mission in the United States have a relatively short history but are rooted in international politics centuries old. The political nuances and entanglements between Korea, China, Japan, and Russia cannot be fully explored in this essay, but an overview of these historical relationships is provided in an effort to contextualize the importance behind Korea's U.S. legation. The following historical narrative relied on existing scholarly research from Yur-Bok Lee's *Establishment of a Korean legation in the United States, 1887-1890: a study of conflict between the Confucian world Order and modern international relations* and Mike Mansfield's essay, "American diplomatic relations with Korea (1866-1910)."

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1866-1880

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It is hard to imagine that any successful diplomatic agreement would emerge from U.S.-Korea interactions between 1866 and 1880. In 1866, the American steamer, General Sherman, was burned and all its crew killed during a trading expedition to Korea. The United States sent a protest to Prince Kung, acting as the Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs, since Korea was considered a tributary of China. Prince Kung replied that Korea's tributary status to China was ceremonial, and nothing could be done on his end.²⁴ Thus, U.S. vessels were dispatched within the subsequent two years to investigate the Sherman incident but with no success.

In 1871, Mr. F. F. Low, then serving as American minister to China, was tasked with opening Korea and negotiating a treaty that would protect future shipwrecked mariners. Acknowledging the tributary status of Korea, Low sent a letter to China requesting them to notify Korea of his party and interest in treaty negotiations. China denied the request arguing that Korea was independent concerning foreign relations. Upon their arrival, Low's survey party was fired upon and Low retaliated with force resulting in the death of 250 Koreans. The U.S. party took over 5 forts and waited for a response from the Korean King but to no avail and eventually they left Korea.²⁵ These are the major events that characterize U.S.-Korean relations until 1881.

1881-1882

By 1881, the Korean empire was warming to the idea of establishing a treaty with the United States. Korea was receiving pressure along its coast from Japan and to its north from Russia. Charged with opening Korea to U.S. relations was Commodore Robert W. Shufeldt.

²⁴ Mike Mansfield, "American diplomatic relations with Korea (1866-1910)" (Master's Theses, University of Montana, 1934), 3-4, accessed September, 2022, <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=5746&context=etd>.

²⁵ Mike Mansfield, "American diplomatic relations with Korea (1866-1910)" (Master's Theses, University of Montana, 1934), 10-13.

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While in China attempting to garner Chinese assistance in contacting Korea's king, Shufeldt

received confirmation of Korea's interest in establishing a treaty of peace and commerce. The major component of this treaty was protection for American vessels shipwrecked in Korea.²⁶ During treaty negotiations, China wanted a statement recognizing Korea as a tributary of the Chinese empire. Although this statement never made it into the final version, the Korean King sent a letter to the United States President after the treaty signing, acknowledging their tributary or dependent status to China.²⁷ On May 22, 1882, the Treaty of Peace, Amity, Commerce, and Navigation was formally signed between the United States and Korea. Article II established the right for both countries to house the other's diplomatic representatives (Figure 25).

1887-1888

Korea sent their first permanent diplomatic envoy to the United States on November 13, 1887. The Korean mission was led by Park Chung Yang acting under the official title of envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary. He was supported by legation officials like Yi Wan-yong, who served as councilor; Yi Tsai-yon, as translator; and Secretary Yi Ha-yong and Yi Sang-jai. Additional legation staff included Kang Jin-hi, Yi Hyon-yong, Yi Jong-ha, Kim No-min, and Ho Yong-op (Figure 26).²⁸

As the 20th century approached, Washington D.C., was becoming a world stage. By 1898 it housed the representatives of several foreign nations including Belgium, Bolivia, Great Britain,

²⁶ Mike Mansfield, "American diplomatic relations with Korea (1866-1910)" (Master's Theses, University of Montana, 1934), 21-22.

²⁷ Mike Mansfield, "American diplomatic relations with Korea (1866-1910)" (Master's Theses, University of Montana, 1934), 25.

²⁸ Yur-Bok Lee, *Establishment of a Korean legation in the United States, 1887-1890: a study of conflict between the Confucian world Order and modern international relations* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois, Center for Asian Studies, 1983), <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015037364497&view=1up&seq=8>, 19.

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China, France, Germany, Japan, Peru, Russia, and Spain.²⁹ When Korea established its own

foreign legation in the U.S. capital, it was exercising the same right as every other independent country before it. By joining this global theater, Korea was communicating its desire to be recognized as a sovereign nation. The Korean Legation furthered this cause by taking actions that challenged their tributary status to China.

Unable to stop Korea from sending a legation abroad, China sought new measures to maintain Korea's tributary status. China mandated that once the Korean Legation landed in D.C. they must report directly to the Chinese minister, who would then bring them to the President to announce their arrival. China also dictated that Korea's foreign mission must receive approval from China's representatives in D. C. on all future major actions. Korea ignored these directives.³⁰ The Korean legation arrived in Washington, D.C., on January 9, 1888, and presented their credentials to United States President Grover Cleveland without the accompaniment of the Chinese minister (Figure 27).³¹ When China received word that the Korean legation presented their credentials to the U.S. government without a Chinese representative, China demanded Korea punish Minister Park for his defiance. Due to ill health, Minister Park returned to Korea but instead of receiving discipline for his actions Park was promoted to Chief Advisor and later Minister of Justice and Minister of Finance.³² The Korean Legation had become an important instrument in Korea's fight for recognition as an independent state.

²⁹ "From Many Lands: The Members of the Diplomatic Corps in Washington," *Evening Star*, October 30, 1897, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045462/1897-10-30/ed-1/seq-19/>.

³⁰ Mike Mansfield, "American diplomatic relations with Korea (1866-1910)" (Master's Theses, University of Montana, 1934), 42.

³¹ Yur-Bok Lee, *Establishment of a Korean legation in the United States, 1887-1890: a study of conflict between the Confucian world Order and modern international relations* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois, Center for Asian Studies, 1983), 19-20.

³² Yur-Bok Lee, *Establishment of a Korean legation in the United States, 1887-1890: a study of conflict between the Confucian world Order and modern international relations* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois, Center for Asian Studies, 1983), 23-24.

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The Korean Legation was first housed at 1513 O Street, Washington, D.C. as of January 18, 1888.³³ That building is no longer standing and renders 1500 13th Street NW the only tangible remnant of early Korea-U.S. diplomacy. A notice, which read “[t]he Corean Legation is being moved into the new legation building, No. 1500 13th street, Iowa circle, which will be the legation address hereafter,” was posted under the *Evening Star*’s Social Matters column on February 14, 1889.³⁴

The Old Korean Legation Building is located at 1500 13th Street Northwest, Washington D.C (Figure 28). The land, square 241, lot 74, which now houses the Legation was first subdivided in 1857 by developer, E. Kingman. Today’s lot 74 was originally lot 61 and purchased for \$4,437.50 on October 22, 1873, by Seth Ledyard Phelps, an American naval officer, politician, and diplomat. He owned the parcel through two more subdivisions in 1877 and 1878, the latter renumbering lot 61 to 74.³⁵

Seth Ledyard Phelps was the original owner of the residence built at 1500 13th Street NW (Figure 29). The home was designed by Thomas M. Plowman and built by Joseph Williams in 1877. By the 1880 census, Seth L. Phelps is recorded as living in the house with his wife, Lizzie, and 3 servants, John Hull, B. E. Thompson, and Mary Griffith.³⁶

³³ Yur-Bok Lee, *Establishment of a Korean legation in the United States, 1887-1890: a study of conflict between the Confucian world Order and modern international relations*, (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois, Center for Asian Studies, 1983), 20.

³⁴ “Social Matters: What is Going on in Fashionable Society-Personal Notes,” *The Evening Star*, February 14, 1889, accessed March 2023, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/145327211/>.

³⁵ Washington D.C. Office of Surveyor Land Records, Liber B Folio 187, Liber JHK Folio 217, Liber JHK Folio 301; Washington D.C.’s Deed Records, Liber 735 Folio 170.

³⁶ United States of America, Bureau of the Census, *U.S. Federal Census*, Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1880, accessed September, 2023, https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/discoveryui-content/view/26881505:6742?_phsrc=eQb495&_phstart=successSource&gsfn=Seth+Ledyard&gsln=Phelps&ml_rpos=1&queryId=136ab20250637923e9053a1b9449eb12.

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Seth Ledyard Phelps (June 13, 1824 – June 24, 1885), began his 24-year career in the Navy in 1841 at the age of 17. His final years in the Navy were spent serving the Union side in the Civil War. After retiring from the Navy in 1865, Phelps was appointed a District Commissioner in 1875 and later the United States' foreign minister to Peru. While living in Peru, Phelps passed away June 24, 1885.³⁷

Upon the death of Seth L. Phelps in 1885, the property was left to his wife, Lizzie Phelps. The will stipulated if Lizzie Phelps were to die then the property would go to their only child, Sally M. P. Brown, and her children.³⁸ Sally M. P. Brown was married to Sevellon Brown, who served as the Assistant Secretary of State. His office would receive Korea's first permanent legation to Washington D.C. three years later.³⁹ It is not a coincidence then that the Korean Legation found its home at 1500 13th Street NW one year after their arrival to Washington D.C. The Phelps and Brown family rented their home to the Korean Legation from 1889 until December 1, 1891, when the Korean Kingdom officially acquired the property for \$25,000.⁴⁰

Events during Korean Legation, 1888-1905

1888-1895

The opening of select coastal ports to Japan in 1876 and Korea's international relations with the United States beginning in 1882 was an abrupt change for a country that historically favored isolation. This change did not go unnoticed by its people. The Treaty of Peace, Amity,

³⁷ "The Late Capt. S.L. Phelps," *The Evening Star*, June 25, 1885, accessed April 27, 2023, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/145274598/>.

³⁸ Lizzie M. Phelps v. Sally M. P. Brown and Sevellon A. Brown, et. al., Equity Case No. 13231, US District Court DC Record Group 21 (1891).

³⁹ Yur-Bok Lee, *Establishment of a Korean legation in the United States, 1887-1890: a study of conflict between the Confucian world Order and modern international relations* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois, Center for Asian Studies, 1983), 19.

⁴⁰ Lizzie M. Phelps v. Sally M. P. Brown and Sevellon A. Brown, et. al., Equity Case No. 13231, US District Court DC Record Group 21 (1891); Washington D.C. Deed Records, Liber 1617 Folio 495.

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Commerce and Navigation had not yet been ratified by the U.S. Senate when an insurrection led by the former king, Tai-Wen-Kun, ensued. The revolt protested Japanese occupation of Korean ports. The Japanese legation was burned down and several Japanese residents were killed.⁴¹ Tai-Wen-Kun was eventually captured and exiled to China. Two years later, another revolt left the Japanese legation in flames again and more Japanese residents died. An attempt was also made on the life of Min-Yong-Ik, who in 1883 served alongside Hong-Yeng-Sik as Korea's first diplomatic representatives to the United States. It seemed with each revolt to remove Japanese influence from Korean land, it only served to strengthen Japan's influence. A third insurrection in 1893 led to a military standoff between China and Japan. Given the results of the previous 2 revolts, Japan sent troops to Korea, and unsure of Japan's true intent, China deployed its own military to the peninsula kingdom. Both parties refused to leave until the other did. Korea reached out to their Korean Legation in Washington, D.C. for help. Korean representative, Ye Sung Soo, forwarded along Korea's request for assistance to the U.S. government. They asked the U.S. to reach out to their own contacts stationed in China and Japan to see if any mitigation efforts could be performed.⁴² Korea was drawing on Article I of their 1882 treaty with the United States which promised that if either country was treated "unjustly or oppressively," the other party to the treaty would step in and help.⁴³ The United States reached out to the Japanese legation to appeal on behalf of Korea.

In August of 1894, Japan and China declared war. Within a month of war breaking out Korea signed a treaty of alliance with Japan that included a stipulation recognizing Korea's

⁴¹ Mike Mansfield, "American diplomatic relations with Korea (1866-1910)" (Master's Theses, University of Montana, 1934), 27.

⁴² Mike Mansfield, "American diplomatic relations with Korea (1866-1910)" (Master's Theses, University of Montana, 1934), 45.

⁴³ Mike Mansfield, "American diplomatic relations with Korea (1866-1910)" (Master's Theses, University of Montana, 1934), 26.

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independence. The Sino-Japanese War ended April 17, 1895, with a peace treaty signed between the two countries in Shimonoseki, Japan. Included in this treaty was recognition of Korea's sovereignty.⁴⁴

While the Sino-Japanese War broke out in the east, the conflict reverberated in Washington, D.C. On September 9, 1894, the Sunday edition of the *Morning News* reported on the tense interactions between the Chinese, Japanese, and Korean legations. As China and Japan jockeyed for control of Korea's peninsula, their representatives in D.C. likewise attempted to outmaneuver the other as they sought the attention of Korea's minister. The article explained "[i]f the members of the Korean legation are seen at the theater with the Chinese one night, it is reasonably certain that they will be found at another theater with the Japanese on the following evening."⁴⁵ In February of 1895, a month before Japan declared victory over China, the Korean Legation refused to adopt the upcoming Chinese calendar. This event was reported in New Jersey's *City Record*, and it marked another important example of how the Korean Legation used its global arena to their advantage. This public rejection of the Chinese calendar, which is followed by China and its dependents, communicated to all that Korea was independent.

1905

In December of 1905, the Korean Legation was forced to close its doors after signing a treaty with Japan on November 17, 1905, which gave Japan control of Korea's foreign affairs. Since the Sino-Japanese War in 1894, Japan had been closing in around Korea. Under the pretense of protecting Korea's sovereignty, Japan declared war on Russia on February 10, 1905. Japan then brokered an alliance with Korea so as to have access to Korean ports for military

⁴⁴ Mike Mansfield, "American diplomatic relations with Korea (1866-1910)" (Master's Theses, University of Montana, 1934), 48.

⁴⁵ "Three Legations: Which Attract much Attention in Washington," *The Morning News*, September 9, 1894, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86063034/1894-09-09/ed-1/seq-6/>.

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operations. The war ended September 5, 1905, with a treaty that specifically stipulated Russia could not interfere in any future plans Japan had for Korea.⁴⁶ Between 1905 and 1910, Japan seized power over all of Korea's governing and policing infrastructure. On August 22, 1910, Japan annexed Korea.⁴⁷

The Old Korean Legation Building is associated with this important historical event. Land records tied to the property reflect Korea's transfer of real and symbolic ownership to Japan. One week after annexation, the Old Korean Legation Building was sold for \$5 to Japanese minister, Baron Yasuya Uchida on September 1, 1910.⁴⁸ That same day, Uchida turned around and sold the former legation to U.S. citizen, Horace K. Fulton, for \$10.⁴⁹ It would be another 102 years before the property's ownership was returned to Korea, or what is now South Korea. The former legation was deeded to the Republic of Korea on October 18, 2012, from the then owners of the time, Laurretta C. and Timothy L. Jenkins.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Mike Mansfield, "American diplomatic relations with Korea (1866-1910)" (Master's Theses, University of Montana, 1934), 61-65.

⁴⁷ Mike Mansfield, "American diplomatic relations with Korea (1866-1910)" (Master's Theses, University of Montana, 1934), 73-74.

⁴⁸ Washington D.C.'s Deed Records, Liber 3358 Folio 94.

⁴⁹ Washington D.C.'s Deed Records, Liber 3358 Folio 92.

⁵⁰ Washington D.C.'s Deed Records, Liber OPR Folio 2012112987.

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Title Chain: 1500 13 th Street Northwest, Washington, D.C.			
Date	Liber, Folio/Doc#	Grantor	Grantee
October 18, 2012	Liber OPR, Doc # 2012112987	Lauretta C. Jenkins and Timothy L. Jenkins	Republic of Korea
September 19, 1977	Doc # 7700029965	Robert S. Pace	Lauretta C. Jenkins and Timothy L. Jenkins
July 17, 1964	Liber 12246, Folio 338	Evelyn H. Letcher and Henry M. Letcher	Robert S. Pace
January 23, 1959	Liber 11180, Folio 533	Charles J. Bell	Evelyn H. Letcher and Henry M. Letcher
“ ”	Liber 11180, Folio 529	Lawrence J. Mills Jr./Martin F. Donoghue/ Elsie L. Leishear	Charles J. Bell
August 20, 1956	Liber 10720, Folio 588	George and Sophia Basiliko	Doris and Earl Towles
“ ”	Liber 10720, Folio 586	Elsie L. Leishear	George and Sophia Basiliko
“ ”	Liber 10720, Folio 580	Elsie L. Leishear	Lawrence J. Mills Jr./Martin F. Donoghue
“ ”	Liber 10720, Folio 573	Charles J. Bell	Elsie L. Leishear
September 1, 1910	Liber 3358, Folio 94	Baron Yasuya Uchida	Horace K. Fulton*
“ ”	Liber 3358, Folio 92	“His Majesty the present King of Chosun Ye”	Baron Yasuya Uchida
December 1, 1891	Liber 1617, Folio 495	Sevellon A. Brown/ Trustee	“His Majesty the present King of Chosun Ye”
October 22, 1873	Liber 735, Folio 170	William H. C. Bayly	Seth Ledyard Phelps

Table 1: Title Chain for the property, 1500 13th Street NW, Washington, D.C.

*Horace K. Fulton’s will devised the property to the American Security and Trust Company, which under Deed of Trust, July 6, 1943, appointed Thomas O’Brien trustee. O’Brien was later replaced by Charles J. Bell who eventually sold the property.

Integrity

The Old Korean Legation Building maintains high historic integrity through its location, setting, design, materials, feeling, and association.

Since construction in 1877, the former legation has remained a permanent fixture at the corner of Logan Circle’s northwest quadrant. Thus, the Old Korean Legation Building retains a high level of integrity of location.

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The late 19th-century romantic housing styles that have been largely preserved along Logan Circle greatly contribute to the setting of 1500 13th ST NW. Logan Circle has maintained its own historical integrity as recognized by its successful listing to the National Register of Historic Places as an Historic District in 1972. In 1994, the historic nature of Logan Circle and its surrounding properties like 1500 13th ST NW, was reiterated with the National Register listing of Greater Fourteenth Street Historic District, which overlaps with the Logan Circle Historic District. The nomination was based on Criteria A and C. The continual preservation of Logan Circle reinforces the Old Korean Legation Building's integrity of setting.

The edifice's Second Empire design with Eastlake influence is well preserved. The major change to the exterior's front occurred during the Korean Legation's residency in which a porte cochère was approved in 1891 for the front façade to provide covered entrance for wagons and carriages.⁵¹ The interior plan and structure of the former legation was retained after undergoing restoration between 2015-2019. The property's original design elements and structure provide a high level of integrity of design and materials.

Restoration work conducted by Korea's Cultural Heritage Administration returned the building to its period of significance as a Korean Legation, 1889-1905. Construction to restore and repair the Old Korean Legation began in 2015 and involved removing paint applied to walls post 1905, repointing failing mortar along exterior, repairing areas of roof damaged by previous water and fire exposure, and ensuring the building is up to code.⁵² The third floor could not be saved, however, due to renovations in the mid-20th century when it served as headquarters for the Drivers, Chauffeurs, and Helpers Local Union No. 639. Even so, the third level still contributes

⁵¹ Korean Cultural Heritage Administration, *A Restoration report*, 32.

⁵² Korean Cultural Heritage Administration, *A Restoration report*, 43-44.

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to the retelling of the historic space through its function as an exhibit hall. The former legation

was opened to the public for tours in 2019. Restoration for interior design relied on historical documentation from newspapers, photographs, and inventory records. On April 8, 1898, a defective heater started a fire in a third story room occupied by one of the legation staff. It was found after extinguishing the fire that several important state documents, pictures, and a desk were destroyed.⁵³ After repairs were made an inventory book was created listing items contained in each room; this document, along with a repair report written by A. J. Fisher Co., an American builders group, provided the basis for room identification and function. Grounded in historical research, the building's exterior and interior condition conveys the feeling and association of its historic role as a Korean legation.

⁵³ "Fire at the Korean Legation," *The Times*, April 9, 1898, accessed October 15, 2022, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85054468/1898-04-09/ed-1/seq-10/>.

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Washington D.C. Office of Surveyor Land Records.

Washington D.C.'s Deed Records.

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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 (as a contributing resource)
☐ 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: National Register of Historic Places

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property "less than one acre"

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☒ NAD 1983

1. Zone: 18S

Easting: 324001.242

Northing: 4308790.414

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

The Old Korean Legation Building occupies Lot 74 of Square 241. The lot is bounded by 13th Street NW on the east; Logan Circle Northwest on the south; Lot 73, Square 241 on the north; and Lot 843, Square 241, on the west.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries of the Old Korean Legation Building, Washington, D.C., correspond with the property lines of Lot 74 of Square 241 and encompass the footprint of the original dwelling and lot.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Emma Lucier-Keller
organization: University of Maryland, Historic Preservation Master's program
street & number: 3835 Campus Drive
city or town: College Park state: MD zip code: 20742
e-mail: elucierkeller@outlook.com
telephone: _____
date: 05/13/2023

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.)

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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: Old Korean Legation

City or Vicinity: Logan Circle, Washington, D.C.

County: N/A State: N/A

Photographer: Emma Lucier-Keller

Date Photographed: 2022-2023

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

Photo	Old Korean Legation Building _01
1 of 12	East (front) Elevation. Looking west
Photo	Old Korean Legation Building _02
2 of 12	South Elevation. Looking north
Photo	Old Korean Legation Building _03
3 of 12	North Elevation. Looking south
Photo	Old Korean Legation Building _04
4 of 12	First Floor Interior. Gaekdang or Front Parlor. Looking south.
Photo	Old Korean Legation Building _05
5 of 12	First Floor Interior. Sikdang or Dining Room. Looking north.
Photo	Old Korean Legation Building _06
6 of 12	First Floor Interior. Jeongdang or Back Parlor. Looking south.
Photo	Old Korean Legation Building _07
7 of 12	First Floor Interior. Former Servants Quarter and Butler's Pantry. Now an orientation room. Ghost of former servant's stairwell left exposed during restoration. Looking south.
Photo	Old Korean Legation Building _08
8 of 12	Second Floor Interior. Staff Legation Office. Looking north.
Photo	Old Korean Legation Building _09
9 of 12	Second Floor Interior. Minister's Office. Looking south.

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Photo	Old Korean Legation Building _10
10 of 12	Second Floor Interior. Library. Looking west.
Photo	Old Korean Legation Building _1
11 of 12	Second Floor Interior. Master Bedroom. Looking south
Photo	Old Korean Legation Building _12
12 of 12	Third Floor Interior. Exhibit Hall. Formerly served as servant and staff's quarters. Looking west.

MAPS

- Location of 1500 13th Street NW, depicted in blue. USGS Topographic Map, Washington West, D.C.–MD.–VA. Quadrangle, 2019.
- District of Columbia zoning map showing location of 1500 13th Street NW.

FIGURES

- Figure 1.** East Elevation. 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.
- Figure 2.** Aerial view of Logan Circle.
- Figure 3.** 4-8 Logan Circle Northwest.
- Figure 4.** Porte Cochère, east elevation, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.
- Figure 5.** North Elevation, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.
- Figure 6.** South Elevation, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.
- Figure 7.** Old Korean Legation Building, first floor, looking west.
- Figure 8.** Old Korean Legation Building, second floor, looking west.
- Figure 9.** Old Korean Legation Building, third floor, looking west.
- Figure 10.** Vestibule, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.
- Figure 11.** Pocket door, door hardware 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.
- Figure 12.** Pocket door, door frame, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.
- Figure 13.** Front Parlor, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.
- Figure 14.** Dining Room, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.
- Figure 15.** Master Bedroom, second story, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.
- Figure 16.** Minister's Office, second story, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.
- Figure 17.** Staff Legation Office, second story, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.
- Figure 18.** Library, second story, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.
- Figure 19.** Exhibit, third story, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.
- Figure 20.** Front elevation of 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C. 1893.
- Figure 21.** Close up of bracket design, Eastlake inspired. Looking west.
- Figure 22.** *The Evening Star* publication on the Korean Minister.
- Figure 23.** 1507 13th Street NW, Washington, D.C.
- Figure 24.** Bullomun Gate, north elevation.
- Figure 25.** Treaty of Peace, Amity, Commerce, and Navigation.
- Figure 26.** Park Chung Yang. First permanent Korean Minister.
- Figure 27.** Depictions of the Korean Legation by *The Fall River Daily Herald*.
- Figure 28.** District of Columbia zoning map.
- Figure 29.** Seth Ledyard Phelps. June 13, 1824 – June 24, 1885.

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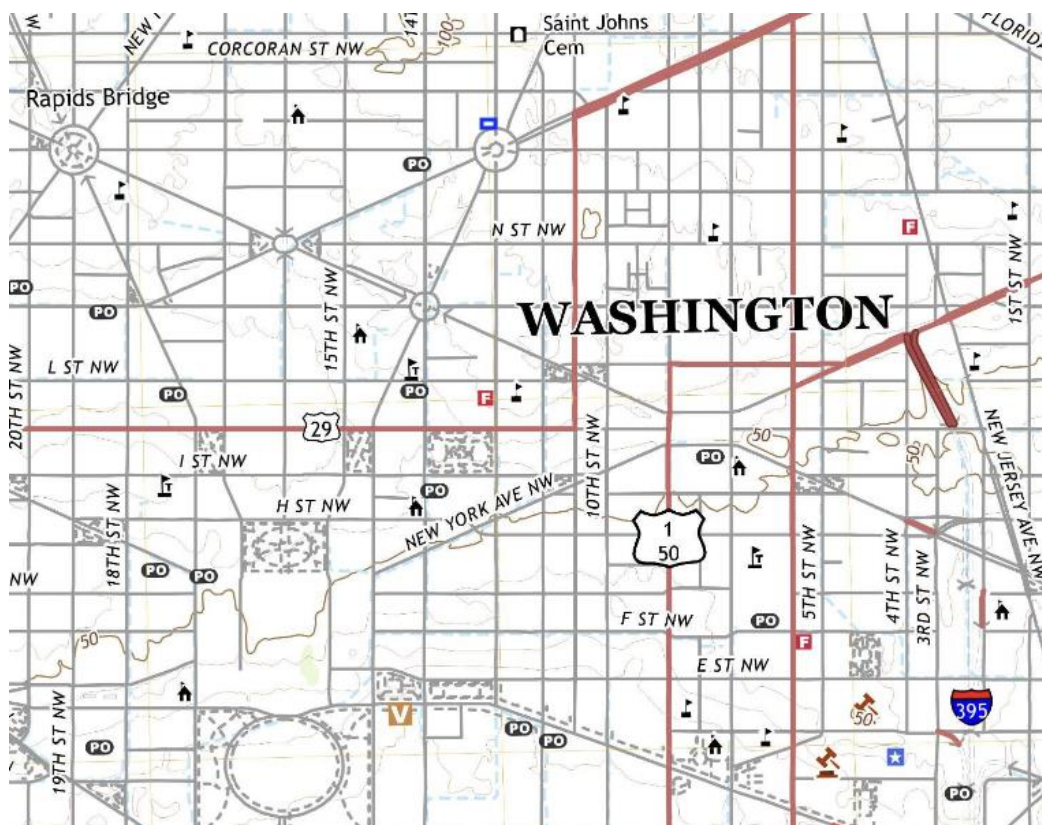
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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. 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.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

- Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
- Tier 2 – 120 hours
- Tier 3 – 230 hours
- Tier 4 – 280 hours

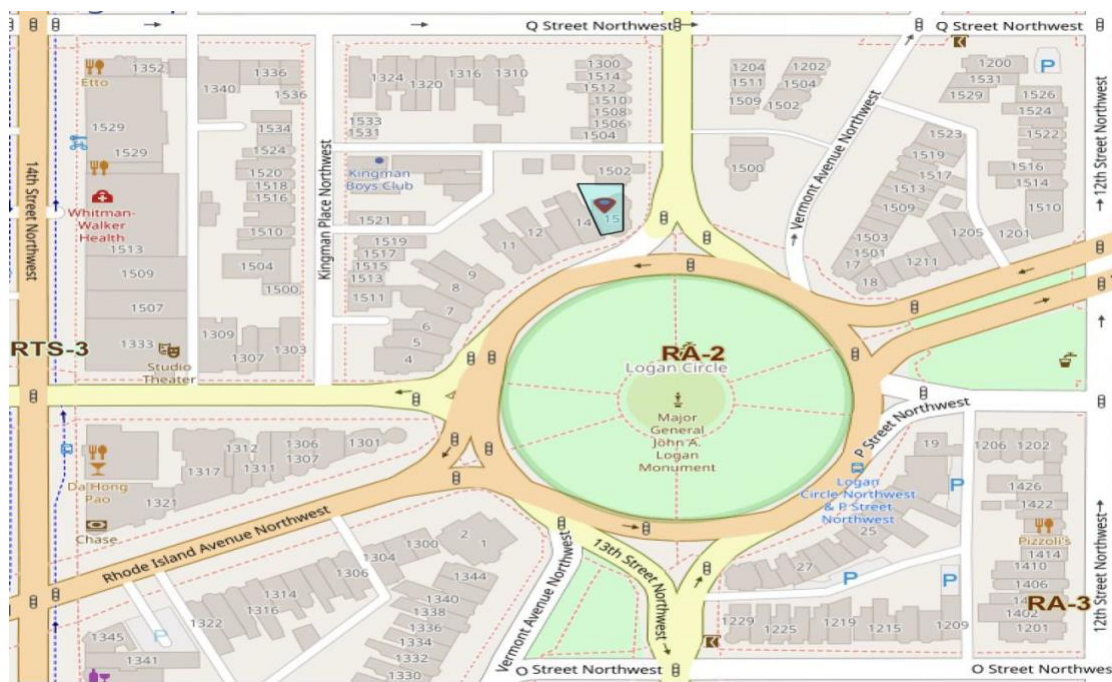
The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.



Location of 1500 13th Street NW, depicted in blue.
USGS Topographic Map, Washington West, D.C.-MD.-VA. Quadrangle, 2019.

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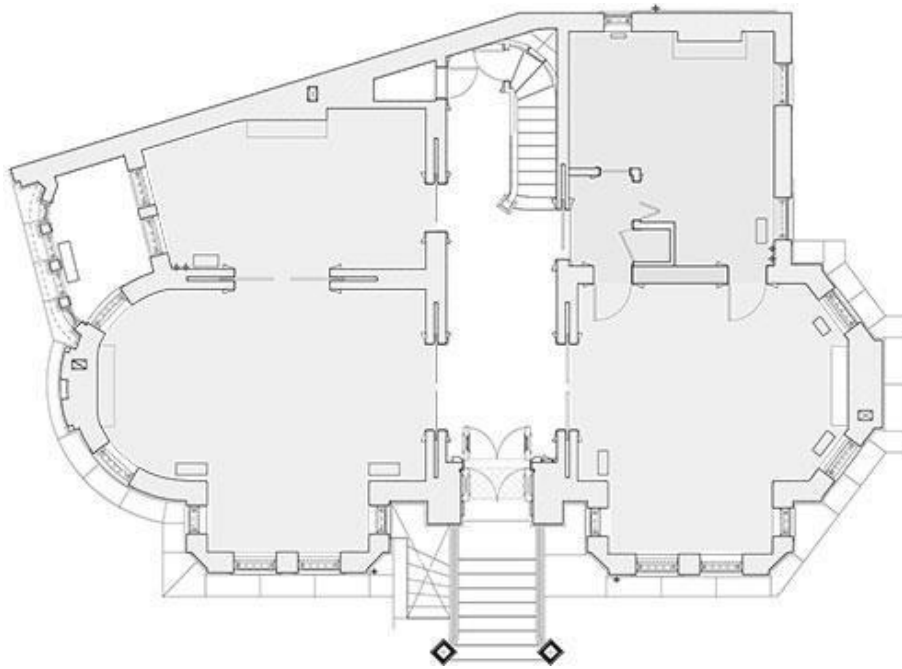
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District of Columbia zoning map showing location of 1500 13th Street NW.
Online link: <https://maps.dcoz.dc.gov/zr16/#l=19&x=-8574929.468850806&y=4708846.187849175&mms=>.

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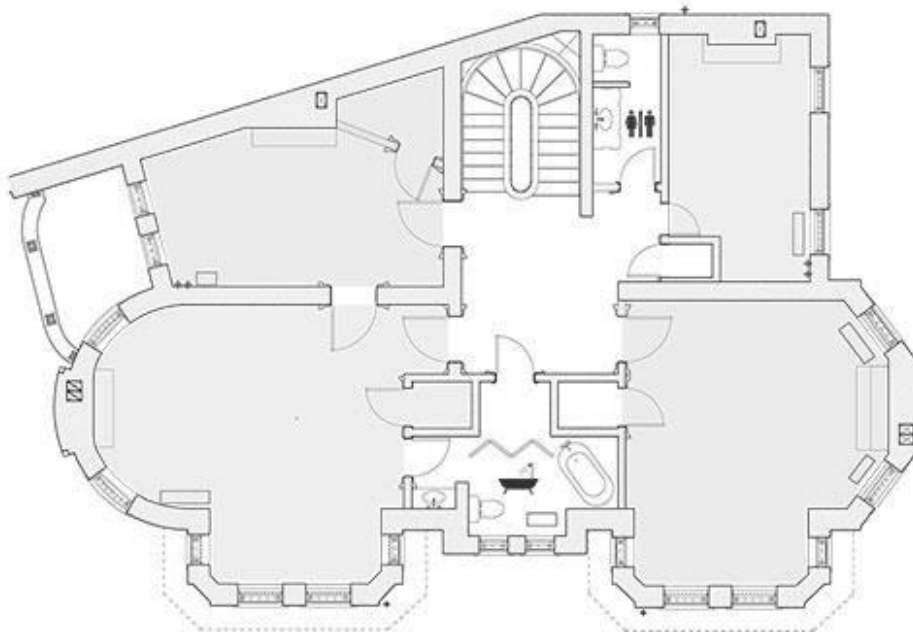


First Floor

Looking west. Online link: <https://oldkoreanlegation.org/en/preview/introduce/#!/f2>.

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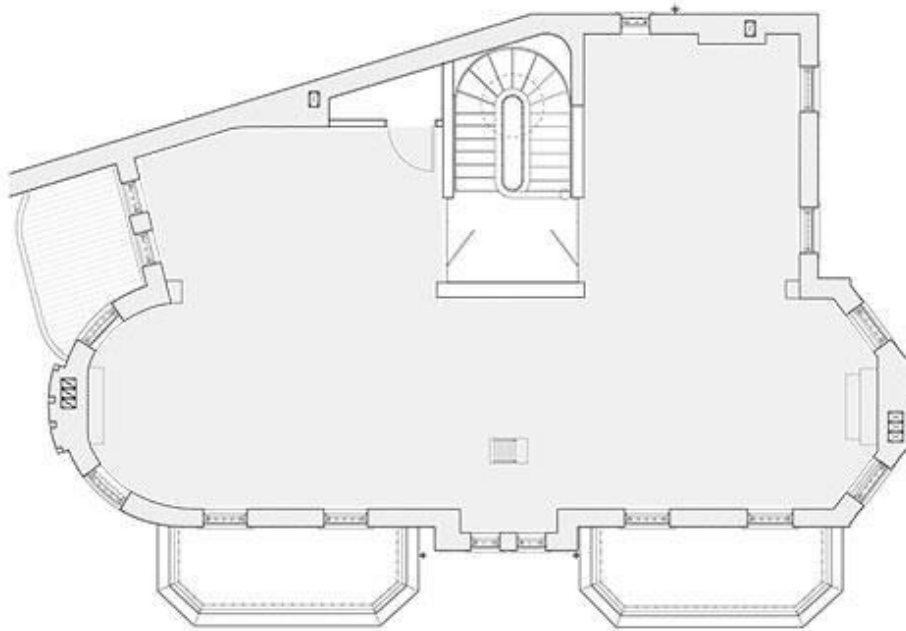


Second Floor

Looking west. Online link: <https://oldkoreanlegation.org/en/preview/introduce/#!/f2>.

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Third Floor

Looking west. Online link: <https://oldkoreanlegation.org/en/preview/introduce/#!/f2>.

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Photo 1: East (front) Elevation. Looking west.



Photo 2: South Elevation. Looking north.

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Photo 3: North Elevation. Looking south.



Photo 4: First Floor Interior. Gaekdang or Front Parlor. Looking south.

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Photo 5: First Floor Interior. Sikdang or Dining Room. Looking north.



Photo 6: First Floor Interior. Jeongdang or Back Parlor. Looking south.

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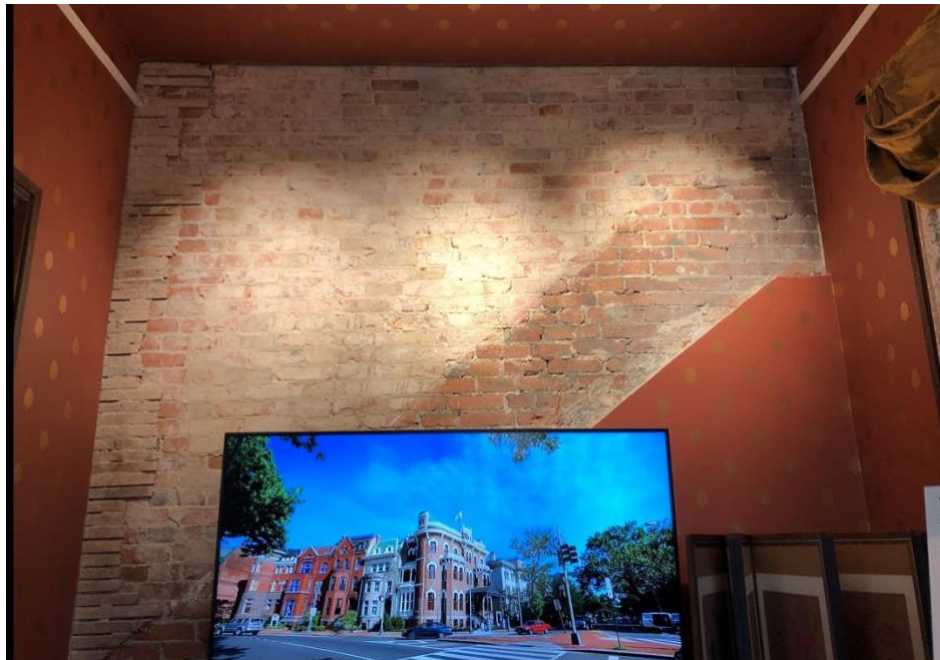


Photo 7: First Floor Interior. Former Servants Quarter and Butler's Pantry. Now an orientation room. Ghost of former servant's stairwell left exposed during restoration. Looking south.



Photo 8: Second Floor Interior. Staff Legation Office. Looking north.

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Photo 9: Second Floor Interior. Minister's Office. Looking south.



Photo 10: Second Floor Interior. Library. Looking west.

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Photo 11: Second Floor Interior. Master Bedroom. Looking south.



Photo 12: Third Floor Interior. Exhibit Hall. Formerly served as servant and staff's quarters. Looking west.

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Figure 1. Old Korean Legation. East Elevation. 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.



Figure 2. Aerial view of Logan Circle. Photographer: Carol M. Highsmith, date unknown. Online access: <https://www.fws.gov/media/484106>.

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Figure 3. 4-8 Logan Circle Northwest. Photograph from Logan Circle Historic District National Register nomination. Photographer: Fred Figall, 1971.



Figure 4. Old Korean Legation. Porte Cochère, east elevation, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.

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Figure 5. Old Korean Legation. North Elevation, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C



Figure 6. Old Korean Legation. South Elevation, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.

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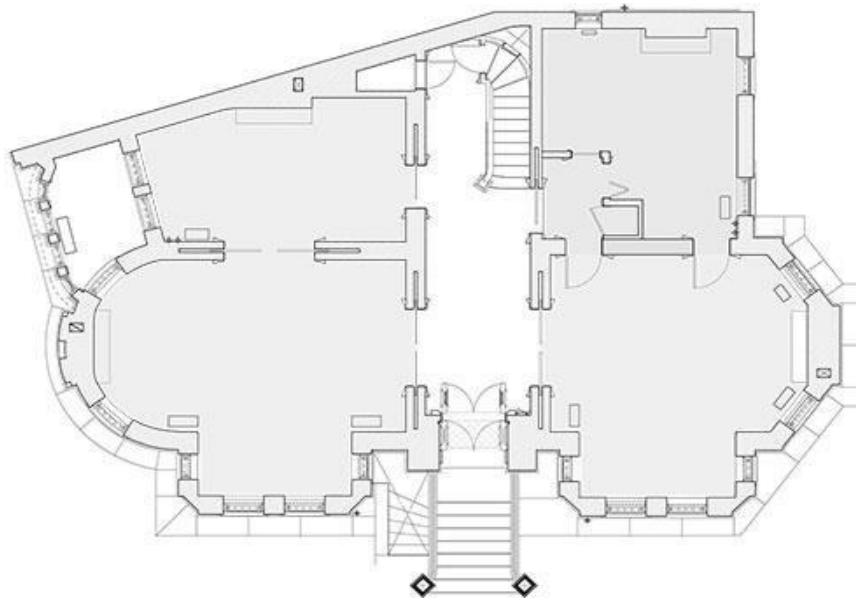


Figure 7. Old Korean Legation Building. First Floor. Looking west.
Online link: <https://oldkoreanlegation.org/en/preview/introduce/#!/f2>.

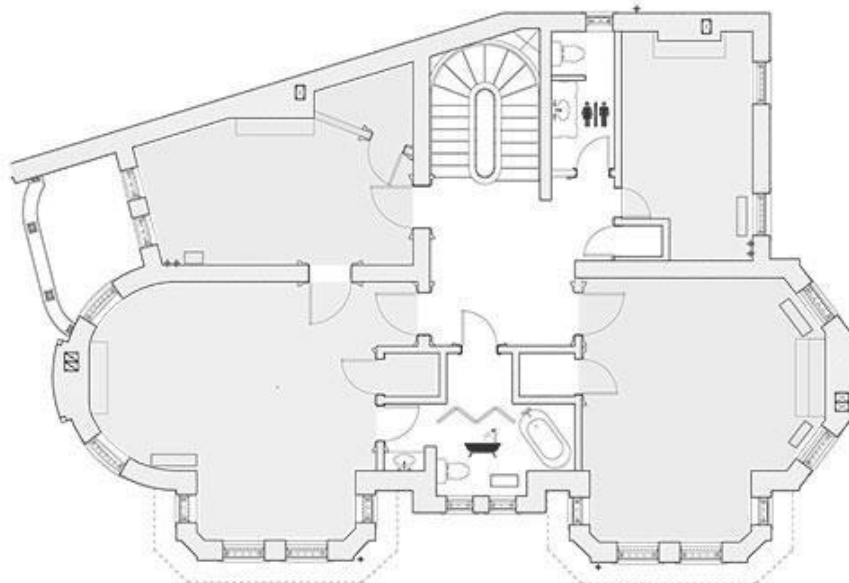


Figure 8. Old Korean Legation Building. Second Floor. Looking west.
Online link: <https://oldkoreanlegation.org/en/preview/introduce/#!/f2>.

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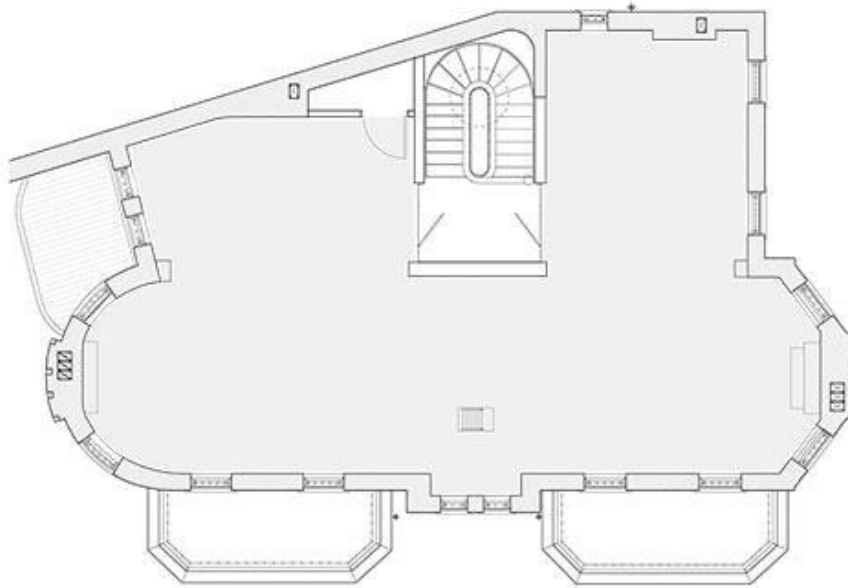


Figure 9. Old Korean Legation Building. Third Floor. Looking west.
Online link: <https://oldkoreanlegation.org/en/preview/introduce/#!/f2>.



Figure 10. Old Korean Legation Building. Vestibule, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.

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Figure 11. Old Korean Legation Building. Pocket door. 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.



Figure 12. Old Korean Legation Building. Door hardware. 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.

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Figure 13. Old Korean Legation Building. Front Parlor, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.



Figure 14. Old Korean Legation Building. Dining Room, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.

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Figure 15. Old Korean Legation Building. Master Bedroom, second story, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.



Figure 16. Old Korean Legation Building. Minister's Office, second story, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.

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Figure 17. Old Korean Legation Building. Staff Legation Office, second story, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.



Figure 18. Old Korean Legation Building. Library, second story, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.

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Figure 19. Old Korean Legation Building. Exhibit, third story, 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C.



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Figure 20. Old Korean Legation Building. Front elevation of 1500 13th ST NW, Washington D.C. 1893. (Source: Old Korean Legation)



Figure 21. Close up of bracket design, Eastlake inspired. Looking west.



Figure 22. "Corea's Minister: Forthcoming Retirement of Pom Kwan Soh,"
The Evening Star, August 15, 1896.

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Figure 23. 1507 13th Street NW, Washington, D.C.



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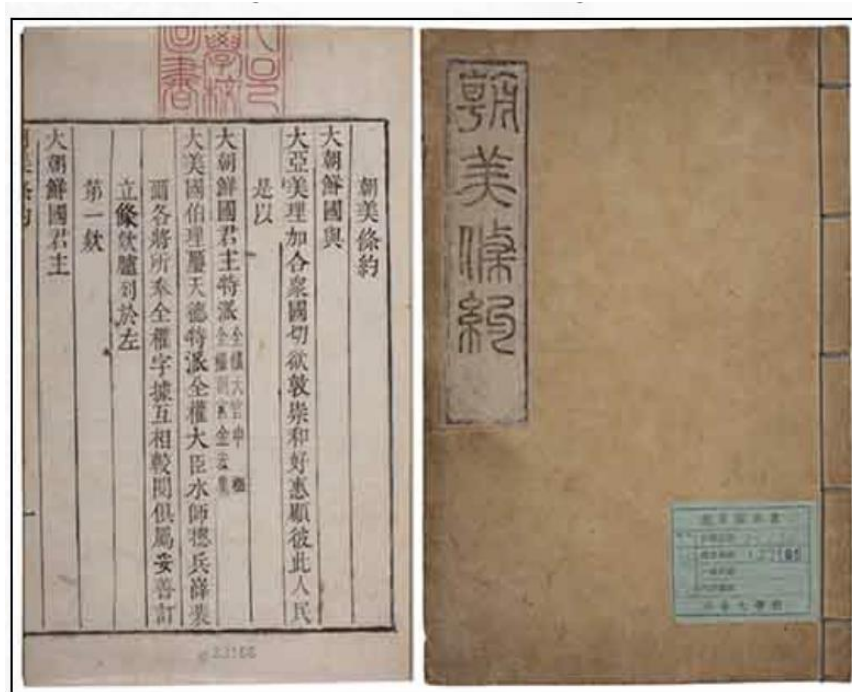


Figure 25. Treaty of Peace, Amity, Commerce, and Navigation. 1882. Signed between the United States and Kingdom of Korea (Source: Old Korean Legation).



Figure 26. Park Chung Yang. First permanent Korean Minister to the United States (Source: Old Korean Legation)

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Figure 27. Depictions of the Korean Legation presenting their credentials to President Grover Cleveland after arriving to Washington, D.C. Reported by *The Fall River Daily Herald*, January 27, 1888.



Figure 28. District of Columbia zoning map showing location of 1500 13th Street NW. Highlighted in Blue.

Online link: <https://maps.dcoz.dc.gov/zr16/#l=19&x=-8574929.468850806&y=4708846.187849175&mms=>

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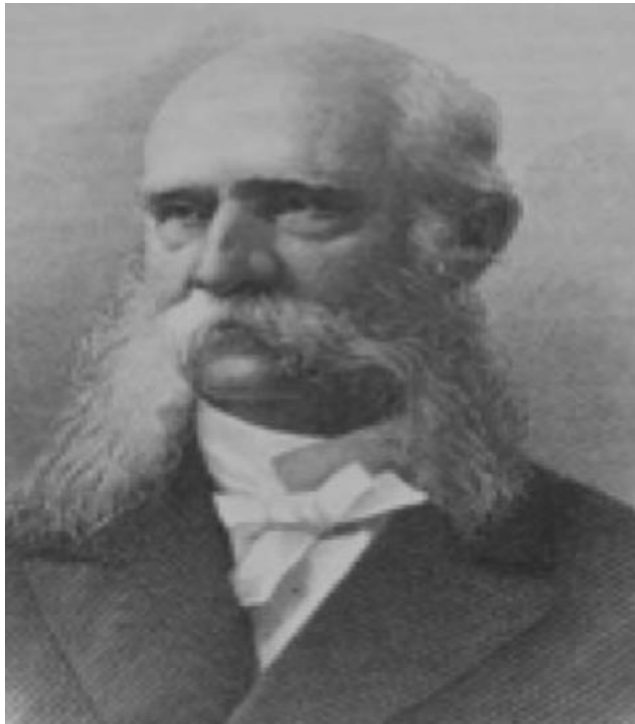


Figure 29. Seth Ledyard Phelps.
June 13, 1824 – June 24, 1885. Online access:
<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/37224690/seth-ledyard-phelps>