

# Ask the Hill Historian: Stanton Park

By **Nina Tristani** - May 6, 2019



*Statue of General Nathanael Greene in Stanton Park.*

Indicated on Pierre L'Enfant's original plan for the city of Washington in 1791, Stanton Park is one of the larger Capitol Hill parks. Its four acres, bound on the northern and southern sides by C Street between Fourth and Sixth streets NE, were named for President Lincoln's secretary of war, Edwin Stanton, following the Civil War.

While the park is named after Stanton, the statue featured at the center of the park depicts revolutionary war hero General Nathanael Greene. Greene is honored for his command of the Army of the South and credited with driving the British out of the Carolinas and Georgia in 1782. Greene's statue is surrounded by formal walkways and flower beds introduced during the 1933 redesign of the park. A play area just west of the statue was added in the park's 1964 redesign.

Stanton Park is a wonderful example of the natural and urban aesthetic in the design of the nation's capital. The largest park L'Enfant planned in Northeast, it has been used as a public park since its first improvement in 1878. It is located within the

National Register Capitol Hill Historic District, and the statue of Nathaniel Greene is among those in the National Register's group listing of Washington's Revolutionary War statues.

The park is within a tract of land originally known as Houp's Addition, owned by Jonathan Slater since 1764 and purchased by William Prout in 1791. The land for the park was acquired by the federal government for streets and avenues in 1791.



The first reference to the space as Stanton Square was made in Babcock's report of 1871, and at the same time its counterpart to the south was referred to informally as Seward Place after Lincoln's secretary of state. One would generally have to pass through either of these two spaces to reach the large park named after Lincoln at the intersection of Massachusetts and North Carolina avenues.

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