

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: P ennsylvania
COUNTY: Washington
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Washington County Courthouse

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
South Main Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Washington

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
26th

STATE:
Pennsylvania

CODE:
42

COUNTY:
Washington

CODE:
125

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate):

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Washington County

STREET AND NUMBER:
South Main Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Washington

STATE:
Pennsylvania

CODE:
42

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Office of Recorder of Deeds, Washington County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:
South Main Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Washington

STATE:
Pennsylvania

CODE:
42

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:

CODE:

STATE: Penna.

COUNTY: Washington

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Washington County court house, constructed at a total cost of \$1,000,000 was completed in November, 1900. It has been fittingly described by another, as follows: "Well may the people be proud of this massive, noble building. It is constructed in Italian Renaissance style of architecture. Its height from the pavement to the top of the dome is 150 feet. It is constructed of Columbia sandstone from Cleveland, South Carolina granite, iron and steel, brick and cement; is entirely fire-proof, and contains fifty-four rooms, including three splendidly arranged court rooms.

"The interior of the building is on a scale of magnificence and artistic beauty that one only expects to see in the great buildings of national reputation. On entering the main corridor a graceful stairway is seen, on either side stretch away vistas of Italian marble corridors; above, supported by twelve immense pilasters, interspersed with Roman arches, hangs the majestic dome, with its jeweled art glass and frescoes in colors and gold. The general finish of the building is exquisite to a degree -- the brass work, the bronze, the gleaming stretches of polished marble and the wonderful color scheme of the decorative work all combine in producing an effect that delights the eye and the senses. In every way the Washington County court house ranks as one of the finest temples of justice in the United States.

There have been only minor internal alterations since its construction. The exterior consists of well-developed Beaux-Arts facades. Each facade has a projecting pedimented central pavillion with lower side wings. The main entrance has a semi-circular 2 story portico supported by colossal Ionic columns. The side elevations have a three colossal Ionic columns "in antis". The building rests on a high foundation podium; the 1st and 2nd stories consist of deeply rusticated surfaces. The large stone gate posts reiterate the rusticated facades. The podium on the front elevation side pavillions consist of carved balustrades; this element is repeated on podiums of the side elevations, as parts of the blocking course, and above the semi circular portico. Classical entablatures with modillions, lentils are evident on all the facades. The windows and doors are all rectangular with flat projecting lintels, except the pavellions lintels which are a broken arch motif with a center wreath; and the 3 entrances, under the portico are set within archivolts with a simple low relief tympanum design. Acroteria crown the pediment corners and apex. On either side of the pediments are monumental sculptural groupings; behind these are small square towers with projecting piers and a dome with a lantern. The focal point of the building is the huge classical center dome with multiple piers rondels, a lantern and a crowning larger than life statue of George Washington.

The building has been used as a court house since its construction. It is well maintained and in superior condition.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

1900

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The present Washington County Court House is the fourth court house built in that county. To build the court house and jail on the public square, the 2 story brick town hall had to be lifted from its foundation and moved back. This occurred during the years 1897-98 and was considered a marvelous feat.

The commissioners chose the plans of the new buildings as prepared by F. J. Osterling, of Pittsburgh, and which has been approved by the judges.

The county lot was 240 feet square. One hundred feet on the west side was obtained by condemnation proceedings. Twenty feet along the south side was receded from to widen Cherry alley. The county lot now occupied, as inclosed by walls, is 220 feet front on Main street and 340 feet in depth.

During the summer of 1898 the brick buildings--court house, jail and sheriff's house--were purchased by William Hockley for \$200.

The statue of General George Washington sculpted by James B. Millard in 1842 was preserved through the patriotism of Charles F. Wallam, and still stands on the corner lot at Locust and Highland.

William Miller & Sons of Pittsburgh were the lowest bidders and therefore selected for the construction of the court house and jail. Their bid was \$397,900. County bonds were issued to help defray all the necessary expenses which were determined to be \$500,000.

The erection of the jail is practically identified with the erection of the new court house. The tearing down of the old jail commenced early in April, 1898, and the excavation for the new jail was finished July 20, when the foundation was commenced. It was not until June 30, 1899, that the jail was occupied by prisoners.

Shortly after the excavation for the new jail was started the excavation for the new court house was commenced, and was speedily pushed to completion. When the corner stone of the court house was laid, March 7, 1899, a copper receptacle, containing relics pertaining to former court houses, photographs of prominent citizens, copies of newspapers, pamphlets, histories, etc., was put in at the northeast corner of the building.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

McFarland, Joseph F., 20th Century History of the City of Washington and Washington County Pennsylvania, Chicago: 1910, pp. 208-210.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		40° 10' 13"	80° 14' 15"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: one acre

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: James D. Van Trump, Landmarks Planning, Inc.

ORGANIZATION: Washington Cty. Overall Economic Development Program DATE: Summer, 1972

STREET AND NUMBER: One South College Street

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: Pennsylvania CODE: 42

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name _____

Title _____

Date _____

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: _____

ATTEST: _____

Keeper of The National Register

Date: _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

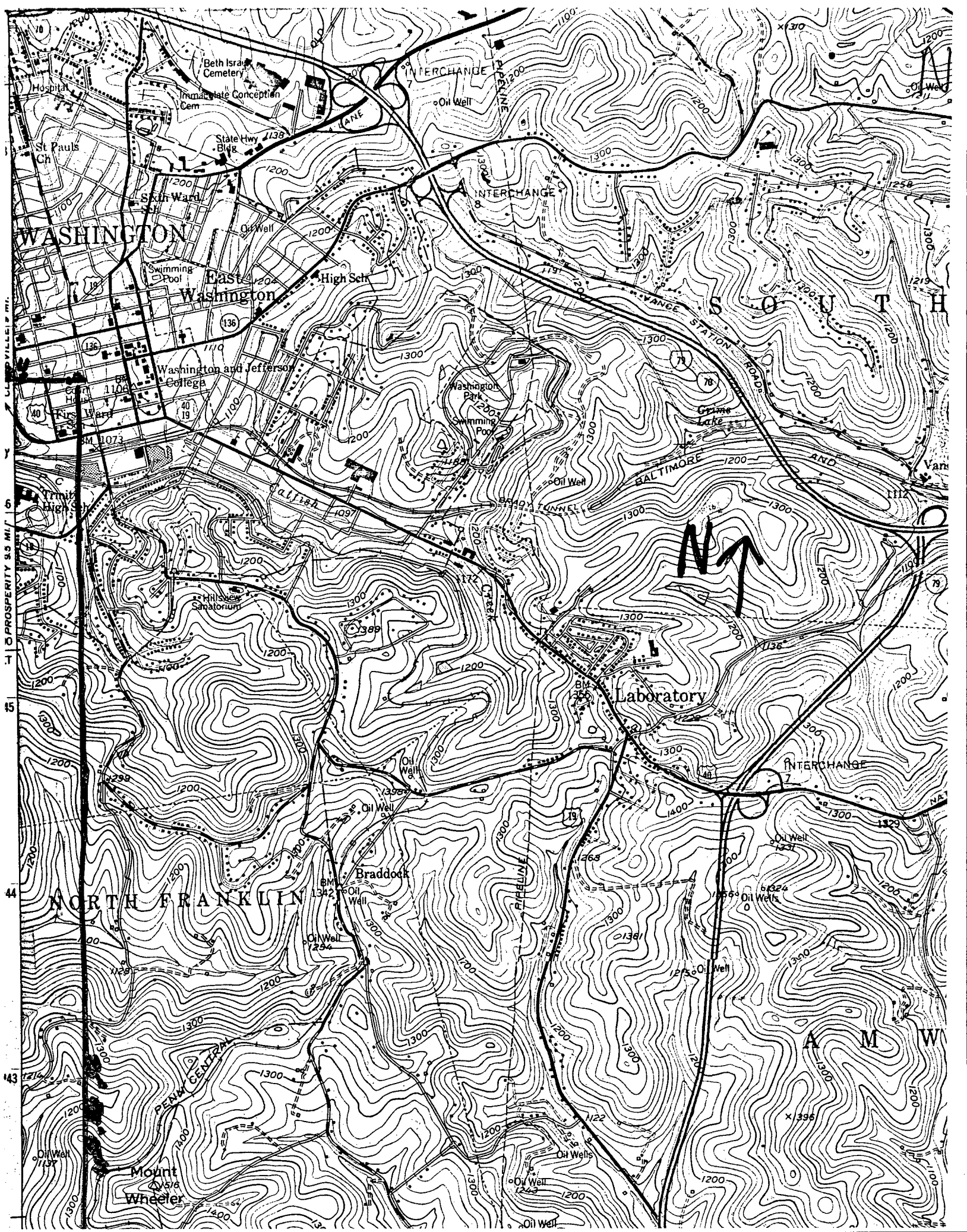
STATE	
COUNTY	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

By August of that year changes were recommended and adopted substituting certain marble floors, instead of wood and other materials, wainscoting with Italian marble and finishing with stucco work and decorations not contemplated in earlier specifications. This increased the original estimates from almost nine hundred thousand by almost fifty thousand dollars, and other furnishings, which might be called extras, increased it that much more.

The Washington County court house, constructed at a total cost of \$1,000,000 was completed in November, 1900. The interior of the building is on a scale of magnificence and artistic beauty that one only expects to see in the great buildings of national reputation. The general finish of the building is exquisite to a degree--the brass work, the bronze, the gleaming stretches of polished marble and the wonderful color scheme of the decorative work all combine in producing an effect that delights the eye and the senses. In every way the Washington County court house ranks as one of the finest temples of justice in the United States.

Architecturally the building was designed in the contemporary Beaux-Arts Classicism style which received its impetus in this country from the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris and from the World Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. Greek, Roman, and Renaissance Classicism dominated the next generation of buildings; specifically public and quasi public buildings, from libraries to train stations. The style commanded respect and provided grandeur and dignity to any location. The Washington County Court House is one of the finest extant Beaux-Arts structures in the country. It derives much significance from the fact that it exists in a moderate size urban area and has had only very minor interior alterations since its construction. It is a grand and majestic architectural statement, the most significant building in Washington County. Its architectural value cannot be denied.



Beth Israel Cemetery
Immaculate Conception Cem
State Hwy 4138
Blg

WASHINGTON
East Washington
High Sch

Washington and Jefferson College
Swimming Pool

Hills Sanatorium
Oil Well

NORTH FRANKLIN
Braddock
Oil Well

Mount Wheeler
Oil Well

INTERCHANGE 8
Oil Well

INTERCHANGE 7
Oil Well

Washington Park
Swimming Pool

Laboratory
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