

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

## 1. Name

historic \ Meadville Downtown Historic District

and/or common

## 2. Location

street & number NA

not for publication

city, town Meadville

NA vicinity of

state Pennsylvania

code

county Crawford

code

## 3. Classification

### Category

- district
- building(s)
- structure
- site
- object

### Ownership

- public
  - private
  - both
- Public Acquisition**
- in process
  - being considered

### Status

- occupied
  - unoccupied
  - work in progress
- Accessible**
- yes: restricted
  - yes: unrestricted
  - no

### Present Use

- agriculture
  - commercial
  - educational
  - entertainment
  - government
  - industrial
  - military
- museum
  - park
  - private residence
  - religious
  - scientific
  - transportation
  - other:

## 4. Owner of Property

name Multiple

street & number

city, town

vicinity of

state

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Crawford County Courthouse

street & number The Diamond

city, town Meadville

state Pennsylvania

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Meadville Historic Sites Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1982-3  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Meadville Redevelopment Authority

city, town Meadville

state Pennsylvania

# 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			N/A

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

The Meadville Downtown Historic District follows, in many ways, the classic development of a small, rural community which eventually emerged into a major commerce, industrial and governmental/institutional market area. The Diamond Park originally planned as a common, open area saw major structures being erected in early to mid-1800's. A Greek Revival church was built in 1835, a 19th Century Gothic Revival church and stately 19th Century homes still stand on the Diamond with little or no changes in their architectural style and in excellent condition. Also located on the Diamond in 1820 was a courthouse and jail that served Crawford County; this is still the site of the County Courthouse. However, a Second Empire Style Courthouse was built late in the 1800's only to be expanded in 1950 and encased in a Georgian Revival Style. Located next to the Courthouse and built in 1843 is a simple two-story 5/5 clapboard Greek Revival structure. Although asbestos "brick-style" shingles were put on the entire building in later years, most of the fine lines and some detailing on the building is still obvious.

Due to the various "boom" business cycles in Meadville the development of commercial structures took the place of a few early residential structures in the business district as well as replacing or rebuilding existing commercial structures. Many early and still existing structures were/are predominately High Victorian Italianate commercial buildings. Typical of this is a building in the recently restored Ralston Block, the Kronenfeld Building (both of which are in good to excellent condition) and the block of buildings on the northside of Chestnut Street between Park Avenue and Market Streets. These buildings are in fair condition as they have undergone a tremendous amount of facade changes.

The classically influenced Romanesque Style Market House, built in 1870, still stands today in excellent condition and is still used as a market place for the exchange of fresh produce. Next to the Market House is the 1920 Crawford County Trust Building. This structure is a six-story classically influenced building still virtually intact. Also of this period is the 1907 Georgian Revival Post Office that has not seen any changes in the architectural intent with the exception of a well-executed building addition. Neighboring the Post Office and of turn-of-the-century Second Renaissance Revival Style is the 5-story Masonic Building. Although some minor repair work included removing the original cornice, the building is basically in-tact and in very good condition. The other structure of notable exception is the Academy of Music. Although in need of repair work and restoration work to the facade, the building is in fair condition.

Although the District is interspersed with some parking lots, some less-than-notable structures and some buildings irretrievably lost to major architectural changes, the District as a whole is strong in the physical attributes of the architecture as well as exhibiting a varied allotment of building styles, all of which are in good to fair condition.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1800 - 1934 Builder/Architect Multiple

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Meadville Downtown Historic District encompasses an historically broad cross section of resources reflecting the City's role as a major center of settlement, government, business and industry from the turn of the 19th Century to the early 20th Century. Within the District are a continuum of architectural styles from the early 1800's to 1940 including significant examples of Greek Revival, Gothic Revival and Italianate.

Meadville's prosperous history has its roots from a humble colony known as Cussewago. In 1788 the first settlers arrived at the present site of Meadville. Among the first settlers was David Mead, his brothers, their wives and families. However, town development was hampered by Indian hostilities. David Mead being optimistic of the settlement's future, laid out the original town plat in 1792 and actually had a few lots sold as early as February, 1793. In 1795 the town was surveyed by Dr. Thomas R. Kennedy and Major Roger Alden, who by then had a business interest with Mead. On June 3rd of that year the last demonstration of Indian hostility in the County was recorded, although the British, as late as 1812 were inciting various Indian groups to hostilities.

Meadville Downtown Historic District includes the nucleus of this Alden-Kennedy town plat including The Diamond, being a common area plus original streets and alleys including Main Street, Federal Street, Park Avenue, Market Street, Center Street, Chestnut Street and Cherry Alley. The Diamond, as planned, remains today a green area for common use and enjoyment of the City's citizens.

In 1800, the Pennsylvania counties of Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Crawford, Erie, Mercer, Warren and Venango were created from a part of Allegheny County. For judicial purpose, owing to sparse population, the counties of Erie, Mercer, Warren and Venango were included in the Crawford County District with the courts of justice to be located in Meadville. In the 1820's a court house and jail were located on the eastern side of The Diamond square, north of Cherry Alley. This is the site of the present day Crawford County Court House and jail. The circa 1950 Georgian Revival Court House completely encases the Second Empire Style Court House which was constructed during the late 19th Century which replaced a simple gable-faced style of the 1820's.

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only.

received

date entered

Meadville Downtown Historic District

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 1

The two western blocks of Chestnut continue to reflect the growth of the City as a market center. An interesting and unique building in Meadville is located here. The Kronenfeld Building at 246-8 Chestnut is a beautiful example of the High Victorian Italianate style that is prominent on the two lower blocks of Chestnut Street. Noted for its oblique configuration (due to the former location of the French Creek Feeder Canal) this building is marked by well executed sandstone sills and lintels as well as elaborate cornice. Further down Chestnut Street is a building built by J. J. Shryock and remained in the family ownership and business until December, 1981. It should be noted that this building contains an original A.M. Fuller Cash Carrier.

Continuing eastward on Chestnut Street toward The Diamond stands a superb Victorian Romanesque theater designed by J. M. Wood, a nationally recognized theatrical architect, for E. A. Hempstead. His 19th Century building still stands intact.

On Chestnut Street from North Cottage to The Diamond is a group of three buildings recently restored. Built between 1880-1890, the Ralston Block, as it is known, consists of an interesting High Victorian Italianate building with original storefronts with a tin cornice. The window lintels are cast iron and the sills are of sandstone. The middle building on the block is a three-story commercial building which was altered by the addition of a wire cut brick veneer over the original Italianate period surface. However, the elements of note include arched headers, leaded light storefronts, original transom windows. The third building is a two-story commercial structure marked by three unique storefronts which are a result of a stone header rather than the more conventional wood or steel. Other features of this building include a dentil cornice as well as the corbel panels on the second story. The pointed arched headers are of cast iron. Originally built to supply consumers' needs of a major market center, they housed a large grocery emporium, piano store and various types of professional offices.

The coming of the 20th Century brought Meadville continued growth in government, institutions, commerce and industry. Meadville's prominence as a regional market and its prosperity is represented by several architectural resources within the proposed District. On Market Street is a very imposing six-story classically influenced structure. Built in 1920 as the Crawford County Trust Company, it is known as "Meadville's only skyscraper". On Chestnut Street is a five-story Masonic Building in the Second Renaissance Revival style of the turn of the Century and a 1907 Georgian Revival Post Office. West of North Cottage/Federal Court on Chestnut Street, two original buildings of the Spirella Corset Company (c.1905) face each other. One is a former sales and show room; one is a manufacturing building. This latter building was later taken over by Talon for manufacturing their zipper.

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Meadville Downtown Historic District  
Continuation sheet

Item number

8

Page

2

The settlement history of Meadville is of regional significance because it was the headquarters for both the Holland Land Company and other private land companies which had a major impact on the settlement of northwestern Pennsylvania. Evidence of the settlement history is found in resources associated with the Huidekoper and Reynolds families. Harm Jan Huidekoper, agent of the Holland Land Company came to Meadville in 1805 and over the years, with his two sons, developed a system of correcting land titles which he had found in a state of chaos. H. J. Huidekoper, in 1835, built the Independent Congregational Church (now the Unitarian Church) which is on the National Register and located in the proposed District on the southside of The Diamond. One of the sons built a structure on Center Street and Park Avenue in 1862 for use as a Market House. Never used for this purpose, it was developed as a library. Still standing in part, this building is encapsulated by a two-story commercial building characterized by Chicago Style openings and simplified Art Deco influenced brickwork. Next to the present day Courthouse a 5/5 clapboard Greek Revival structure (c.1843) was built for John Van Liew Reynolds, son of John Reynolds who was a successor to Dr. Kennedy.

Around The Diamond are other fine examples of early to mid-1800 architecture built by David Derickson. David Derickson, a prominent Meadville citizen and attorney, built a Jefferson Classical one-story Revival structure at 918 Diamond for use as a law office. Derickson built the neighboring single classical brick structure, c.1830. In addition, Derickson later built a second empire structure on the same block, c.1848. All three of these buildings remain today, facing the Diamond. Derickson, in addition to being a counselor-of-law, also served as Deputy Attorney General and District Judge in Pennsylvania.

Within the proposed District are several fine examples of architecture from the last half of the 19th Century. Meadville's economy had benefited significantly from the oil industry, coming of the Great Atlantic and Western Railway and the industrial boom. Development around The Diamond continued into the late 1800's and is evidenced by stately homes and churches. Commerce and industry developed along Chestnut Street, Center Street and Market Street.

On the Diamond square is the exquisite High Victorian Italianate Tarr Mansion, built for James and Elizabeth Tarr. The Tarrs owned a farm being the site of the biggest oil strike ever found at that time. They sold the farm for \$2 million in gold and moved to Meadville. J. D. Downing, an oil producer, built the late 19th Century Queen Anne structure at Chestnut Street eastward beyond The Diamond. On The Diamond is the late 19th Century Gothic revival Episcopal Church which serves as a fine example of stonework, corbeling and sandstone tracery.

An example of commercial development to serve the needs of a growing community caught in the midst of the industrial boom is the 1870 Market House on Market Street. Originally a story and a half Classically influenced Romanesque style Market House, this structure had its roof raised and a full second story added in 1917. The first floor has remained intact. It has been continuously used as a Market House for local growers and craftsmen to sell their wares. Next to the Market House is a three-story structure known as the Kepler House Hotel. No longer used as a hotel, the first floor of the building is occupied by various

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Meadville Downtown Historic District

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 3

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Meadville's association with industry continues with the Keystone View Company, makers and sellers of stereoptic equipment. The Keystone View Company, located at 865 Market Street from 1929 until the early 1960's made three dimensional views for recreational and educational purposes. Many school districts throughout the country relied on equipment and views produced in Meadville and sold by traveling salesmen. When other educational equipment took the place of stereoptics, Keystone View produced optometry equipment until the Company was sold in the early 1960's and consolidated into another form and relocated to the University of California at Riverside. The building associated with the Keystone View Company is located in the proposed District at 865 Market Street.

More recent 20th Century architecture of interest include the Beaux Arts commercial building at Park and Chestnut Street with an intact terra-cotta belt course, the three-story Chicago School commercial structure on Chestnut Street, the Moderne style of Wolff's hardware store on Market Street, the Meadville Traction Company trolley car diner and the fanciful "castle-like" style service station at Park and Walnut Streets.

The Meadville Downtown Historic District, being the nucleus of Meadville's settlement and development activities, provides an opportunity to preserve a broad cross section of resources reflecting settlement, growth and development from the standpoint of government, commerce and industry. The District possesses a concentration of architectural styles with a high degree of integrity from the early 1800's through 1940.

# 9. Major Bibliographical Reference

See Continuation Sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Approx 6.5

Quadrangle name Meadville

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A	17	570490	4609960
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	17	5710440	4609770
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	17	570850	4609650
---	----	--------	---------

D	17	570920	4609990
---	----	--------	---------

E	17	570820	4609980
---	----	--------	---------

F	17	570800	4609880
---	----	--------	---------

G			
---	--	--	--

H			
---	--	--	--

Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	code
-------	-----	------	--------	------

state		code	county	code
-------	--	------	--------	------

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Martha L. Karuba

organization Meadville Redevelopment Authority

date June 10, 1984

street & number 628 Arch Street

telephone (814) 724-2975

city or town Meadville

state Pennsylvania

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national
  state
  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Larry E. Tise, State Historic Preservation Officer

date 7/10/84

For NPS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Meadville Downtown Historic District

Continuation sheet

Item number 9

Page 1

Reynolds, John Earle, In French Creek Valley. Crawford County Historical Society, Meadville, 1938.

History of Crawford County, Pennsylvania. Warner, Beers, Chicago, Illinois, 1885, 2 volumes.

Historical and Industrial Review of Meadville, Pennsylvania. Meadville Chamber of Commerce, Tribune Publishing Company, 1912

Meadville Its Past and Present, Sesqui-Centennial Edition. The Tribune-Republican, Meadville, May 12, 1938.

Centennial Edition. Daily Tribune-Republican, Meadville, May 11-12, 1938.



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Leadville Downtown Historic District  
Continuation sheet

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Item number 10

Page 1

Beginning at the southeast corner at the intersection of Mulberry Alley and Walnut Street, then, going easterly along the southerly curbline of Walnut Street to the southeast corner of the intersection of Walnut Street and Diamond Park; then going northerly along the westerly property line of the property located at the northwest intersection of North Main Street and Diamond Park to Mill Run; following Mill Run in a northeasterly direction to the back property line of the property located at the northeast intersection of North Main Street and Diamond Park; then going southerly along the westerly curbline of Chancery Lane to the northwest corner at the intersection of Chancery Lane and Clinton Court; following the northerly curbline of Clinton Court to the northeast intersection of Mulberry Alley and Clinton Court; then going northerly along the easterly curbline to the point of beginning.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Meadville Downtown Historic District  
Continuation sheet

Item number 10

Page 2

The boundaries for the Meadville Downtown Historic District were selected to encompass the viable concentration of downtown architecture which represents Meadville's developmental history from a young and confident settlement in the early 1800's to the proud and prosperous regional center of the 1940's. Other examples of fine period architecture can be found scattered throughout Meadville. However, the District contains a recognizable intact concentration of buildings which reflect Meadville's heritage as a regional center of government and business.

The eastern boundary, Chancery Lane, was selected to include those properties which front on The Diamond. These properties are the sites of historically significant buildings representing government and similar public institutions important to the development of Meadville. Continuing beyond the eastern boundary, present day land use patterns change to a residential nature which is not in keeping with the District's purpose.

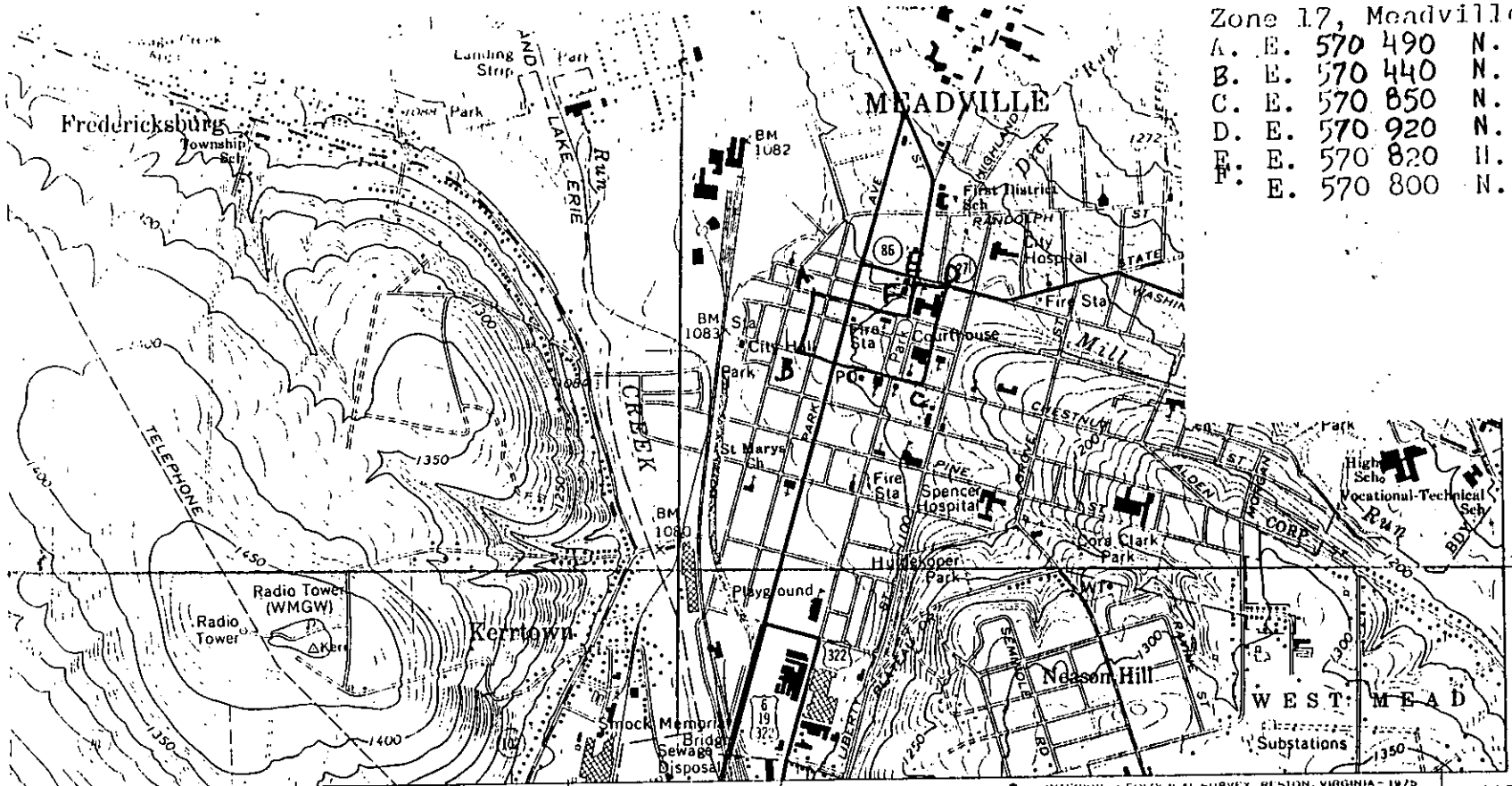
Mulberry Alley is the western boundary delineating a sharp change in architecture. Beyond Mulberry Alley is the Water Street commercial area which historically was the site of some of Meadville's earliest commercial buildings. Unfortunately, because of redevelopment projects Water Street's original buildings have been lost, lot layout changed and street patterns disrupted.

The northerly boundary identifies the extent to which downtown architecture extended beyond the core area. North of Walnut Street and the Junior High School, land use concentrations change to a residential nature.

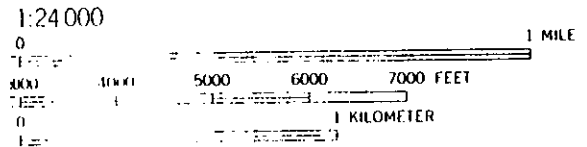
Clinton Court was selected for a southern boundary. This boundary limit provided a clear delineation between the downtown business concentrations and a mixed residential/commercial development pattern. The concentration of historically significant commercial buildings declines sharply beyond the southern boundary. The amount of intrusions beyond Clinton Court exclude these areas from the Meadville Downtown Historic District.

Meadville Downtown Historic Dist.  
Zone 17, Meadville Quad

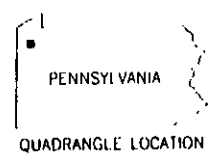
A. E.	570 490	N.	4609 960
B. E.	570 440	N.	4609 770
C. E.	570 850	N.	4609 650
D. E.	570 920	N.	4609 990
E. E.	570 820	N.	4609 980
F. E.	570 800	N.	4609 880



NEVA) 1:24000 COCHRANTON 12 MI. INTERIOR GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA - 1975 572000m E. 41°37'30" 80°07'30"



VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

- Primary highway, all weather, hard surface
- Light-duty road, all weather, improved surface
- Secondary highway, all weather, hard surface
- Unimproved road, fair or dry weather
- Interstate Route
- U. S. Route
- State Route

MEADVILLE, PA.

N4137.5—W8007.5/7.5

1968

AMS 4967 II NW—SERIES V831