**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Complete all applicable sections)

1. **NAME**
   - COMMON: "First" Hardy County Courthouse
   - HISTORIC: Old Hardy County Courthouse

2. **LOCATION**
   - STREET AND NUMBER: Winchester Avenue and Elm Street
   - CITY OR TOWN: Moorefield
   - STATE: West Virginia
   - CODE: 54
   - COUNTY: Hardy

3. **CLASSIFICATION**
   - CATEGORY (Check One)
     - District
     - Site
   - OWNERSHIP
     - Public
     - Private
     - Both
   - STATUS
     - Public Acquisition:
     - Being Considered
     - In Process
   - ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
     - Yes:
     - Restricted
     - Unrestricted
   - PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)
     - Agricultural
     - Commercial
     - Educational
     - Entertainment
     - Government
     - Industrial
     - Military
     - Museum
     - Religious
     - Scientific
     - Private Residence
     - Transportation
     - Other (Specify)

4. **OWNER OF PROPERTY**
   - OWNER'S NAME: Mrs. Carl B. Allen
   - STREET AND NUMBER: General Delivery
   - CITY OR TOWN: Moorefield
   - STATE: West Virginia
   - CODE: 54

5. **LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**
   - COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
     - Hardy County Courthouse
   - STREET AND NUMBER: Elm Street
   - CITY OR TOWN: Moorefield
   - STATE: West Virginia
   - CODE: 54

6. **REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**
   - TITLE OF SURVEY:
   - DATE OF SURVEY:
   - DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
   - STREET AND NUMBER:
   - CITY OR TOWN:
   - STATE:
   - CODE:

**SEE INSTRUCTIONS**
The Old, or "First," Hardy County Courthouse was constructed in segments, the first built in 1792-93 and the extension added about 1833. A contract for the first section, fronting on Franklin (now Elm) Street, was let by April 1792 to Abel Seymour for the original amount of £ 150. This was apparently completed by late 1793, with other workers having been employed at additional cost to "finish" the structure. Question of need for a new courthouse in 1833 led to a decision to erect the second portion of the "L"-shaped building, to be used as a clerk's office.

The 1792-93 section had 18 inch thick brick walls placed atop a sound stone foundation. Approximately 25' x 50', the structure included the court room on the second floor, and the lower level was open so that horses could be taken through the arched, brick passageway into the open courtyard to the back. The gabled roof was topped by a belfry which housed a bell used to announce court sessions. Brickwork was of Flemish bond, and a carved and bracketed cornice underlined the roof's edge.

Also of brick, but with walls only 12 inches thick and in a stretcher bond, the second section was a two-story, 50' x 25' addition. Facing Rockaway (now Winchester) Avenue, this segment was placed about six feet from the courthouse, the front ranging with that structure on the gable end. German influence in a slightly upturned gable is prevalent in the addition. Containing two rooms above and two below with a fireplace in each, it was originally roofed with tin. This section was connected to the courthouse by a platform and stair.

Over the years the building has undergone a number of changes. At some unknown date between 1860 and 1900, the open stairway between sections was roofed over, and a floor at ground level in the old courthouse closed off the courtyard. A porch, built about 1902 and surrounding the Elm Street and Winchester Avenue fronts, was removed in the latest refurbishing, indicating fine federal lines in the original courthouse building. Windows in the two segments were of various sorts and remained so until remodeling in 1972 when all were replaced by 9/9 or 6/6 double-hung sash. Entrances have been changed as the building has served various functions; now there are two on the Winchester Avenue side. The brickwork has been painted white, and a retaining wall about two feet high and three feet deep serves as a planter around the front. Remodeling was accomplished under the direction of Miss Marjorie Pierce of Weston, Massachusetts, an architect with a fair amount of experience in restoration work.
8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian
- 16th Century
- 175th Century
- 18th Century
- 19th Century
- 20th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1792-93, c. 1833

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Education
- Political
- Urban Planning
- Prehistoric
- Engineering
- Religion/Philosophy
- Historic
- Industry
- Science
- Other (Specify)
- Agriculture
- Invention
- Sculpture
- Architecture
- Landscape
- Social/Humanitarian
- Art
- Architecture
- Social/Humanitarian
- Communications
- Literature
- Theater
- Conservation
- Music
- Transportation

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Originally constructed in 1792-93 with a section added about 1833, the Old Courthouse has served Hardy County, Virginia and West Virginia, as its seat of administration and justice, in the capacity of a boarding and finishing school for girls and as the residence and publishing office of one of its well-known citizens.

Hardy County was organized as a separate and distinct county in 1786, in pursuance of an act of the Virginia General Assembly adopted on December 10, 1785, from a part of Hampshire County. This in itself was significant, for it attested to the growing number of inhabitants in Virginia's back-country shortly after the Revolutionary War and the need to serve them with more immediate government.

Moorefield, newly laid out in 1777, provided two lots for county use, and, after about a year of court meetings in a rented residence, the first courthouse, 25' x 26' in dimension, was constructed of logs to house administration and court until 1793. Such quarters apparently proved too confining or too poor to a growing area, for in 1792 the leaders let a contract for a more substantial brick edifice. Built between 1792 and 1793, this structure would be used by the populace of Hardy as the county courthouse until roughly 1860, having an addition made about 1833 to house the clerk's office.

New quarters were opened for county offices just prior to the commencement of the Civil War, and the old courthouse, with lot and all the buildings thereon, was ordered sold. Transferred in private hands in 1861, 1866, and 1867, the structure finally became the property of three enterprising sisters named Forrer from Strasburg, Virginia. Two of them, the Misses Kate and Sally as they were known to their students, conducted a private girls' day and boarding school in the building, thus offering one of the few chances for females of the surrounding area to obtain formal instruction in various subjects.

The Forrer sisters sold the building in 1900 to Captain John J. Chipley, in whose family the property remained until 1970. Chipley, one-time mayor of Moorefield, published the weekly Hardy County Democrat (fore-runner of the still published Moorefield Examiner) there from 1897 to 1902. A Mr. C.H. Herbert also conducted a school in the structure, and J. Ed Chipley, a lawyer, and J.D. Chipley, Jr., assessor, had offices there for a number of years.

Besides being one of the oldest buildings in Hardy County, then, the Old Hardy County Courthouse has been functional in its relation to the town of Moorefield and surrounding area. After use as the county courthouse for nearly seventy years, it served as a school, office building,
8. SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

newspaper publishing house and apartment dwelling. Its history has a depth and variety making it impressive beyond the superficiality of its interesting facade.
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES


10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1/2 acre

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

STATE: CODE COUNTY: CODE
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11. FORM PREPARED BY

Name and Title: James E. Harding, Research Analyst
Organization: West Virginia Antiquities Commission
Street and Number: Old Mountainlair, West Virginia University
City or Town: Morgantown
State: West Virginia
Code: 54

12. STATE LIASON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

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: Leonard M. Davis
Title: State Historic Preservation Officer
Date: May 9, 1974

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

Director, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Leonard M. Davis

May 9, 1974
ELM STREET  (Formerly Franklin Street)

"OLD JAIL LOT"

12,208 square feet
.28 of an acre

Bergdoll Lot

Plat showing the "Old Court House and Clerk's Office Lot" containing .28 of an acre and located at the corner of Elm Street and Winchester Avenue in the Town of Moorefield in Hardy County West Virginia.

Scale 1" equals 40'    Survey made March 16, 1972
**PROPERTY MAP FORM**

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

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**INSTRUCTIONS**

**STATE**
West Virginia

**COUNTY**
Hardy

**FOR NPS USE ONLY**

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