

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

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received
date entered

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

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

1. Name

historic West Virginia 4 - H Camp for Negroes; Camp Washington - Carver

and/or common Camp Washington - Carver Complex (preferred)

2. Location

street & number County Route 11/3 not for publication

city, town Clifftop X vicinity of congressional district Second

state West Virginia code 54 county Fayette code 019

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name West Virginia Department of Culture and History

street & number The Cultural Center, Capitol Complex

city, town Charleston vicinity of state West Virginia 25305

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Fayette County Courthouse

street & number Court Street

city, town Fayetteville state West Virginia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes no

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<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		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Camp Washington - Carver complex is located on a state-owned, 583-acre tract at the terminus of County Route 11/3, approximately 2 miles northwest of Clifftop and U. S. Route 19, in Fayette County, West Virginia. Centered in the complex is the Great Chestnut Lodge, a log building of unusual size and structural character. Subsidiary buildings, structures, and facilities include a log cottage, two frame dormitories, a water tower, and a small pond. The complex, comprising the lodge and its dependencies, occupies landscaped, shaded grounds of about 30 acres. The 2500 - foot elevation of the complex, its natural setting, and its remote siting are significant environmental features of Camp Washington - Carver.

An Act of the West Virginia Legislature passed March 9, 1937, authorized the creation of the "Negro 4 - H Camp" to provide the state's black youth with a designated recreation and camping area in which the extension services department of West Virginia State College would provide educational opportunities in vocational agriculture, soil conservation, home economics, and 4 - H standards. Following construction of the camp in the period 1939 - 42, it passed from the West Virginia Board of Control to West Virginia State College (a formerly all-black institution), under whose management the camp operated until it was deeded by the Legislature to another state agency in 1978. In 1979 the camp became the property of the West Virginia Department of Culture and History. The facilities are presently (1980) being developed by the Department to interpret and promote West Virginia culture, art, performing arts, and crafts.

The Negro 4 - H Camp (Camp Washington - Carver) was designed by the State Board of Control and constructed by local manpower of the Works Progress Administration from timber, stone, and other materials acquired and produced exclusively at the building site. According to the justification for production of materials (WPA application 610-1142-30459) the activities consisted of "the quarrying of 476 cubic yards of stone for masonry purposes and the cutting and sawing of 220,000 board feet of rough lumber and 1,550 logs, which timber will be salvaged from the clearing operation and consist principally of dead chestnut."

During the autumn months of 1939, from 41 to 65 persons were employed in clearing and production activities. Of special significance was the availability of large quantities of native chestnut timber recently killed by the blight that ravaged chestnut stands throughout West Virginia. The Assembly and Dining Hall (Great Chestnut Lodge) and guest cottage were entirely constructed of this wood. At the outset of the project, Harold J. Cramer, in a letter to Walter R. Thurmond (president of the Board of Control), made the following statement regarding the timber resources: "The timber is scattered over the entire 600 acres and its cost of manufacture would prohibit a commercial operation, but as the clearing of these dead chestnut trees would reduce the fire hazard and increase the beauty of the area, we feel the work justified."

Following clearing and production schedules that began September 26, 1939, construction operations from plans produced by the Board of Control and approved by the WPA commenced. Mr. J. R. Strock, civil engineer, and Mr. Frank C. Harris, landscape architect, designed much of the complex, though they were assisted in the task by WPA engineers. Laborers, truck drivers, handymen, carpenters, electricians, plumbers, stone masons, and timekeepers were employed in the construction of the Washington - Carver complex. The Assembly and Dining Hall alone required the skilled labor of 3 stonemasons and 7 carpenters.

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Assembly and Dining Hall (Great Chestnut Lodge) Construction: spring 1941 -
spring 1942.

The Great Chestnut Lodge is the largest log structure in West Virginia built entirely of chestnut. The one and one-half-story building is a modified Latin cross with a gabled block (Assembly Hall) facing south, and a gabled wing or ell (Dining Hall) oriented on a north-south axis.

The Assembly (Great) Hall is entered from a lobby-foyer housed in a south facing one and one-half-story gabled pavilion. Flanking the lobby's large open fireplace are double doors opening into the Great Hall. The Hall measures 110 feet by 53 feet and contains approximately 6000 square feet of unobstructed space. Trusses of the roof-support system are carried (at the walls) by hewn timbers, called pilasters by the engineers, measuring up to 16 inches square. Engineer J. R. Strock designed the Hall with a complex roofing truss but was requested by WPA engineer Emory A. Hoke to redesign the system in a simpler form. Strock's re-design, as outlined in his reply to Hoke of August 14, 1940, is recorded as follows:

I redesigned the truss, and used a triangular fink truss with the teco split ring connectors for the joists. As you probably know, the Timbering Engineering Company, a subsidiary of the National Lumber Manufacturers Association, manufactures the teco timber connectors.

By using this type of truss and these connectors, they will get a very good design with the consequent lightening of the purlins. The roof rafters will run parallel to the top chord of the truss, and be supported on the purlins, which means the top of the roof rafters will line up with the top of the top chord of the truss. This type of Fink truss can be easily fabricated and assembled in the field by any carpenter, as you will see from the detailed layout.

The Dining Hall of the Great Chestnut Lodge occupies most of the first floor space in the huge ell that forms a north-south perpendicular with the Assembly Hall. The 24 by 85-foot open dining area is impressive, though four rows of 12 by 12-inch timber columns break the flow of space conveying a strong sense of weight. Dormitory rooms above the Dining Hall are lighted and cross-ventilated by five gabled dormers in each roof plane. The total length of the Dining Hall ell, including a spacious kitchen at the north end, is over 80 feet.

The Great Chestnut Lodge contains 534 logs (112,000 board feet) "Slabbed off" (sawn) on two sides down to an 8" thickness, and "V"-notched at the ends. The logs were then hacked with a broad ax or adz to give them a hand-hewn effect and to approximate "typical early log constructions in West Virginia." The 4-inch

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joints were (are) chinked and daubed with wooden wedges and mortar of lime and cement. All partition walls, window, door, and other trim, are fashioned of chestnut. The chestnut logs of the gable ends of the Lodge measure 60 feet in length. Foundations are constructed of locally quarried stone (weathered surfaces facing out) and are solid masonry. The roof was designed with a "3/4 pitch" and was originally covered with 156 squares of white oak shingles (now asphalt shingles).

Log Cottage Construction: 1940.

Construction of the 2-room log guest cottage preceded work on the Great Chestnut Lodge. Structural character and detail are essentially the same as those found in the Great Lodge. The building, also of chestnut, was designed to house guests of the camp. It was more recently used for craft instruction. The log cottage stands 150 feet northeast of the Lodge.

Frame Dormitories Construction: 1942.

Located 500 feet northeast of the Lodge are two one-story frame dormitories. The roughly sawn chestnut lumber corresponds figuratively to the style of camping expected of the occupants. The buildings measure 80 feet by 20 feet.

Water Tank and Pond - 1940

At the southwestern corner of the immediate complex, overlooking a small pond, stands a 75-foot steel water tower with a 40,000 gallon capacity. The pond is about 400 feet southwest of the Great Lodge.

Concrete Block Houses

Flanking the entrance drive 200 feet south of the Great Lodge are two concrete block houses used by the camp in previous years for staff accommodations. Built after the period of construction of the original complex, the buildings do not contribute to the architectural character of the complex.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)	West Virginia his

Specific dates 1939-42

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Camp Washington - Carver complex near Clifftop, Fayette County, West Virginia, is a significant group of major buildings, dependencies, and facilities that has achieved exceptional importance within the past 50 years as the focus of cultural activities and events significant in West Virginia Black history. The complex is equally significant as an unusually well-preserved large-scale project of the Works Progress Administration which combined resources of federal, state, and local agencies with local manpower in the late 1930's to revitalize segments of the national economy during the Great Depression. Camp Washington - Carver is perhaps best known for its Great Chestnut Lodge, a log building built entirely of West Virginia chestnut. The enormous lodge, with its satellite facilities, is sited on a landscaped grounds at an elevation of 2500 feet above sea level in a remote section of southeastern West Virginia.

Public concern for the development of talents and productivity of blacks in West Virginia before Brown versus Board of Education was centered at West Virginia State College at Institute, at Camp Washington - Carver, an adjunct facility of the extension service division of State College, at Bluefield Institute, and, to a smaller extent, at Storer College in Harpers Ferry. A move to provide the state's black youth with outdoor educational and recreational facilities developed in the late 1930s in part to take advantage of funding opportunities offered to the State Board of Control (the state agency that sponsored construction of Camp Washington - Carver) by the Works Progress Administration, and to establish a complex of the quality offered West Virginia' white youth at Jackson's Mill, a 4 - H camp. Legislative authorization of the Camp, and official stipulation that it become a unit of West Virginia State College's agriculture extension service, resulted when a bill was introduced by Black legislator and attorney Fleming A. Jones, Jr., of Welch (who served in the House of Delegates from McDowell County, 1935-43; 1945-47), and passed by the Legislature March 9, 1937 (Acts and Resolutions of the Forty - Third Legislature of West Virginia - Regular Session, 1937, Chapter 101). Following construction of the Negro 4 - H Camp in the period 1939-42, the Board of Control in its Twelfth Report stated that the facility was "the first of its kind in the entire nation."

The Negro 4 - H Camp, subsequently named Camp Washington - Carver by West Virginia State College for the great Black leaders, Booker T. Washington (1856-1915), and George Washington Carver (c.1864-1943), was a center serving from 200 to 1600 black youth in areas of vocational agriculture, soil conservation, home economics, and 4 - H standards. Its facilities, including the Great Chestnut Lodge, log cottage, dorms, pond, and grounds form a complex of interrelated structures built of locally fashioned hardwood and native stone to conform to the natural environment. It survives as a well-preserved example of one of West Virginia's most ambitious WPA projects.

The Great Chestnut Lodge (Assembly and Dining Hall), a mammoth log structure that is the center of the complex, is the largest log building in West Virginia, the largest structure in West Virginia built entirely of chestnut, and contains the Great Hall, the greatest unobstructed enclosed space of any log structure in the state. Because chestnu

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stands were destroyed throughout the country by uncontrolled blighting in the 1930's, the materials of the Great Lodge, log cottage, and subsidiary buildings become increasingly valuable as the complex ages.

Camp Washington - Carver was designed by the West Virginia Board of Control as a project of the WPA. Civil engineers J. R. Strock and landscape architect Frank C. Harris played large roles in the actual preparation of designs, plans, and drawings for the facilities. They were assisted in these duties by a number of WPA and Board engineers who reviewed the project and schedules. Several names of prominent project professional personnel included: Cosby Cooke, F. A. Wyant, F. R. Ehrke, Emory A. Hoke, and a Mr. Burgess. The complex was constructed by locally available labor (not "convict" labor as has been alleged).

Dedication of the West Virginia Negro 4 - H Camp occurred on July 26, 1942. The ceremony was attended by a host of state dignitaries and featured a major address by Governor M. Mansfield Neely. Other prominent leaders included John W. Davis, president of West Virginia State College, and D.T. Murray, president of the Negro state board of education. The gathering was serenaded by the bands of Garnet and DuBoise High School.

Continued use of the Camp Washington - Carver complex for educational and entertainment purposes was assured in 1979 when ownership of the immediate complex with its 583-acre tract was passed to the West Virginia Department of Culture and History. The Department is presently adapting the facilities for use as a center to interpret and promote West Virginia culture.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Acts and Resolutions of the Forty - Third Legislature of West Virginia (Regular Session)

Charleston, W. Va. 1937, Chap. 101, pp. 411-13.

"Four - H Camp is Dedicated", Charleston Daily Mail, July 27, 1942., p. 9.

"4 - H Camp for Negros Dedicated at Clifftop," Charleston Daily Mail, July 27, 1942, p. 3.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 30 acres

Quadrangle name Winona, West Virginia

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

1	7
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5	0	2	7	6	0
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5	0	2	4	2	0
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4	2	0	6	8	8	0
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C

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4	2	0	6	5	4	0
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D

1	7
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Verbal boundary description and justification

Beginning at a point 425' southeast of the Great Lodge in the center of County Route 11/3, (200' southeast of concrete block cottages) proceed east in a straight line 400', thence in a straight line 1200' to the north, thence in a straight line 1000 ft. to the west.

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

state	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Rodney S. Collins, Architectural Historian; C.E. Turley, Field Research Assistan
Historic Preservation Unit

organization Department of Culture and History date April 29, 1980
The Cultural Center

street & number Capitol Complex telephone 304/348-0340

city or town Charleston state West Virginia 25305

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Clarence Illorson

title State Historic Preservation Officer date May 6, 1980

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Twelfth Report of the West Virginia Board of Control. Charleston, West Virginia

July 1, 1936 to June 30, 1939, pp. 363; 437-38.

West Virginia Blue Book, 1941, p. 174

WPA, Project No. 665-41-2-153 (Correspondence and Specifications), Record Group
#69, Reel No. 1023, National Archives of the U. S.

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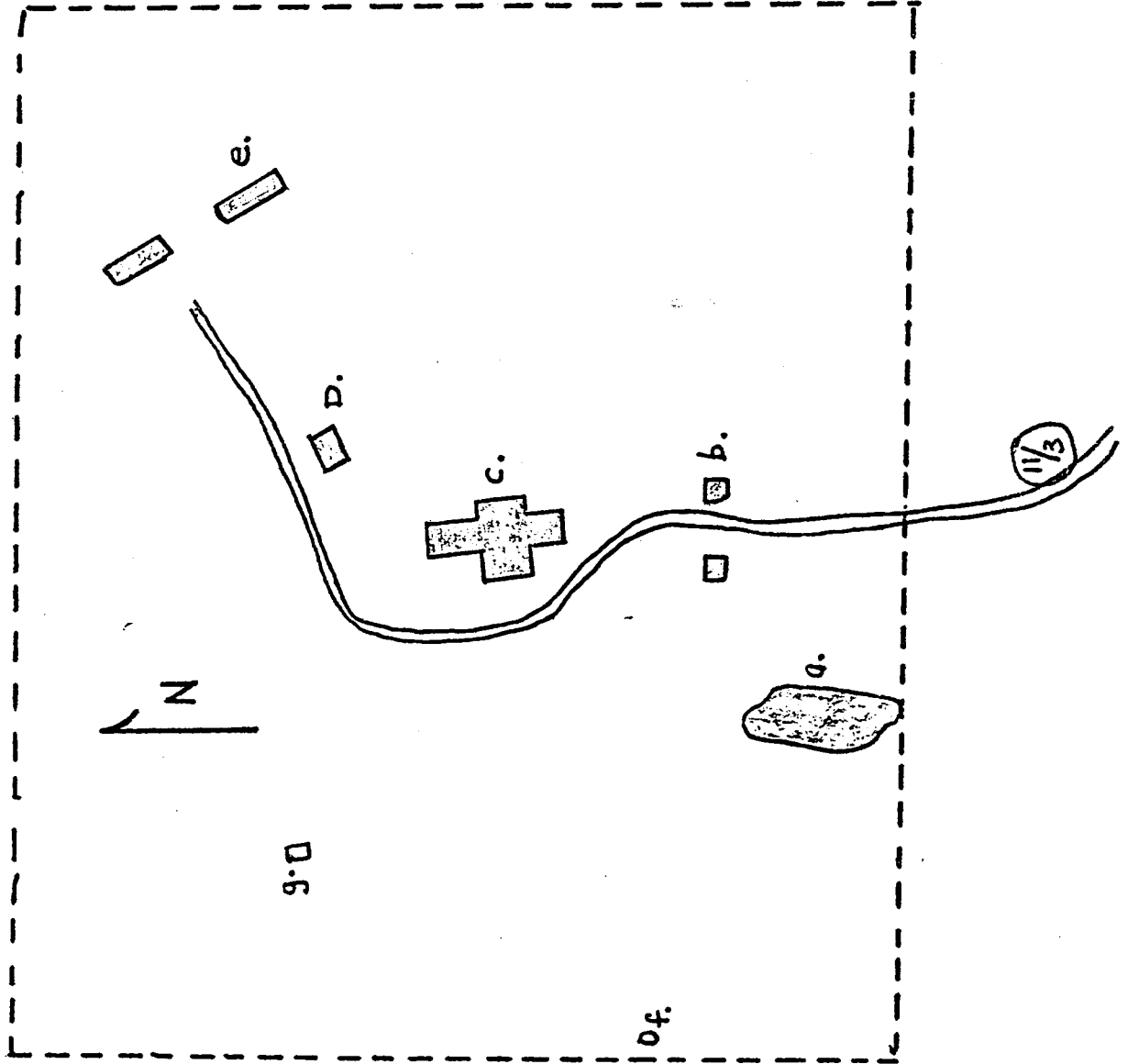
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thence in a straight line 1200' to the south, thence in a straight line 600' to the east, to form a rectangle 1000' x 1200'.

CAMP WASHINGTON-CARVER COMPLEX
 FAYETTE COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA



A. Pond

B. Concrete Block Cottages

C. Great Chestnut Lodge

D. Log Cottage

E. Frame Dormitories

F. Water Tower

G. Swimming Pool

1 Inch = 200 ft. Approx.

--- Boundary of Nominated Area

CAMP WASHINGTON-CARVER
 COMPLEX
 CLIFFTOP VICINITY
 FAYETTE COUNTY
 WEST VIRGINIA
UTM

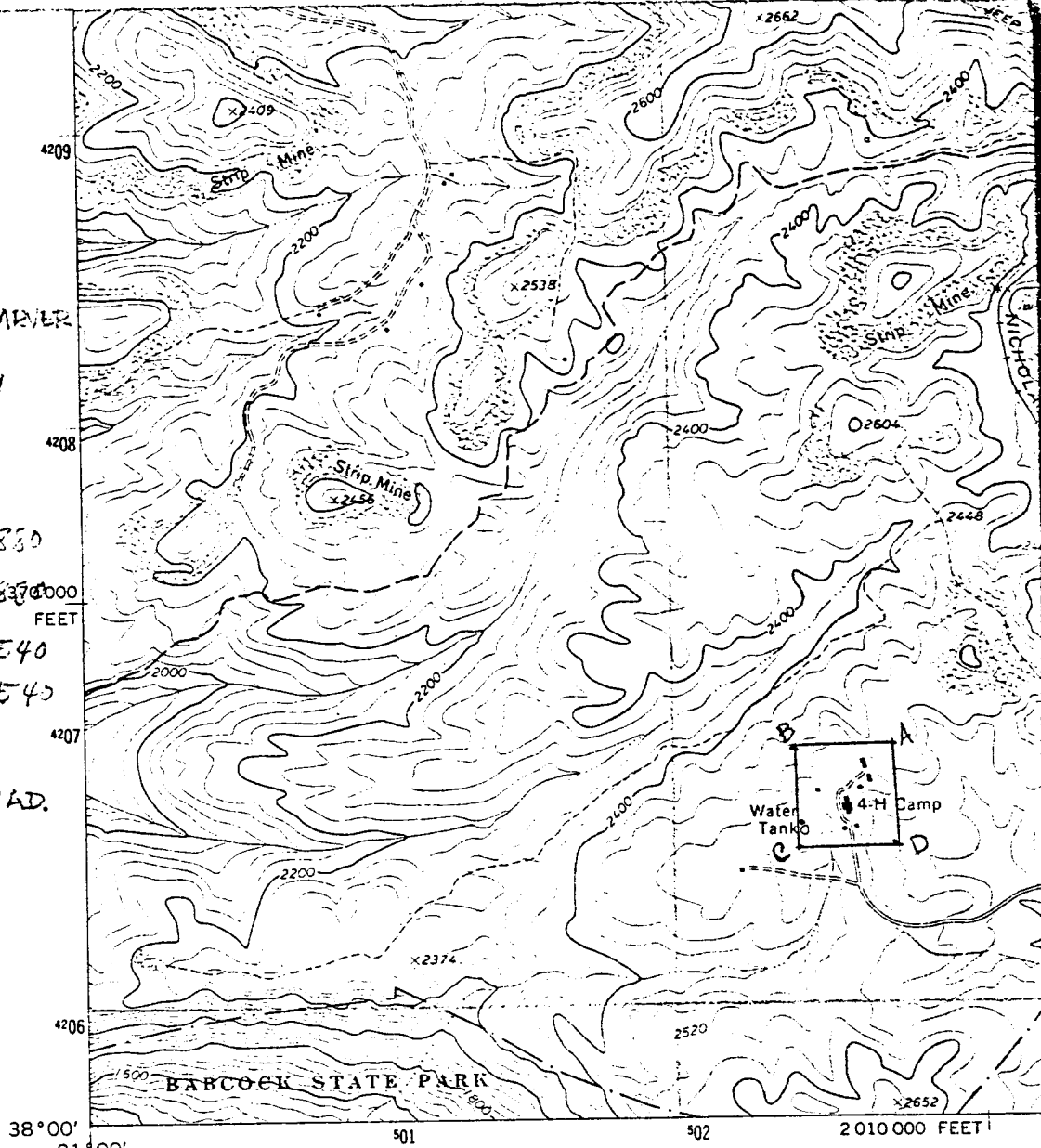
A. 17/502760/4206830

B. 17/502420/4206830

C. 17/502420/4206540

D. 17/502760/4206540

WINONA, W.VA. Q1AD.

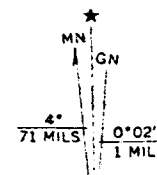


(THURMOND)
 4759 1 NE

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
 Control by USGS and USC&GS

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
 taken 1969. Field checked 1969

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
 10,000-foot grid based on West Virginia coordinate system,
 south zone
 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 17,
 shown in blue



UTM GRID AND 1969 MAGNE
 DECLINATION AT CENTER C



WASHINGTON CARVER