

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

For NPS use only

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

received JUL 10 1984
date entered AUG 24 1984

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

1. Name

historic Crim, J.N.B., House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number ^{WV} State Rt. 57, Clarksburg Pike not for publication

city, town Elk City vicinity of

state WV code 54 county Barbour code 001

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A 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 Peggy Chesser Hadley and Julia Chesser Martine (sisters)

street & number Rt. 4, Box 714

city, town Washington vicinity of state NC 27889

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Barbour County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Philippi state WV

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A 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 N/A
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The J.N.B. Crim House, a large red brick Italianate-style 19-Century residence, occupies a hillside plateau on a 200 acre farm at Elk City,* Barbour County, West Virginia. It is an imposing home with immense square and rectangular hand chisled limestone foundation blocks, walls of hand pressed brick made on site, columned front portico, tall vertical segmental-headed window openings, all with tooled limestone sills, gabled centered front and side elevations, low roofs with well preserved overhanging eaves in sawn and open-work wooden ornamentation. This home was built from 1874-1875 at a cost of \$2,000 and with its dependencies (large barn, grainery, large smokehouse, spring house, etc.) was assessed in 1876 at \$3,500, the land at \$8,000. This masonry home is unique to the area. In its fine state of preservation, it stands as a reminder of excellence and beauty in our architectural heritage, all the more remarkable as in this century the old homes in the area have all but disappeared and since World War II the waters of Elk Creek in Barbour County have become most visibly the site of extensive strip mining activity.

The Crim House is an L-shaped, two-story brick house. The hand pressed bricks are laid in common bond with occasional courses in which headers and stretchers are used. The front portico has been restored. Floor, ceilings, and roof had disappeared early in this century. The Italianate-style bracketing was not restored. The flat roof is supported by eight wrought iron columns. Six inch square dark red ceramic tile cover the floor. The original sandstone foundation and rectangular cutstone stairs remain. The original louvered shutters are missing; some pintles remain.

The east elevation originally housed two open porches, one above the other, with ornamental wooden balconies. In the early 1950's, along with the front portico restoration and installation of central heating, these porches were converted into upstairs and downstairs bathrooms. Nondescript plywood siding forms the exterior walls. The lower porch was entered from inside at the rear of the entrance hallway. At midpoint it opened into the dining room and terminated in a larger square porch area which lead to the kitchen and also housed the well. The upstairs porch was entered from the back of the upstairs hallway, the middle bedroom, also from a rear stairway. The rear stairway led also to the servants' quarters.

The west elevation, secondary porch remains intact. It is very picturesque with arched lattice screens between the porch posts. The kitchen may also be entered this way.

The dwelling's low Italianate-style roof (asbestos shingle, formerly slate) is broken by twin interior chimney's and gabled center bays with fan lights on the front and west side elevations. The broad eaves are bracketed with wooden drops, creating a cyra reversa molding.

On the south elevation, four double hung tall vertical segmental windows flank the entrance doorway which has side lights of three upper glasses with solid bottom panels and a transom light capped with a segmental

*Elk City - 6 miles west of Philippi.

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top. This pattern of entrance and windows is repeated in the upper facade except for a large double hung central window rather than wooden door. This window may function as a door onto the roof of the portico.

A two-flight, half spiral, open string stairway with hardwood walnut spindles rises midway on the left of the open well entrance hall. The floors of the eight rooms of the house are fitted with timber from the farm. The first story in walnut, the four upstairs bedrooms each in a different hardwood, cherry, chestnut, black walnut and hickory. All walls are plastered and painted. One bedroom is in the original beige and mauve. The parlor ceiling is the original frescoed one, painted with remarkably well-preserved central floral panel, four smaller floral and fruit panels and a coat of arms motif in each of the corners. A painted cornice with fleur-de-lys design follows the borders of the room. All rooms have fire places with cast iron fire places and mantles with arched cartouches. All rooms have floor to ceiling windows which follow the line of the segmental arches, twelve foot ceilings and lovely hardwood floors. The dining room also has a built in walnut china cabinet. The Crim House stands uniquely, an intact example of a wealthy upper class business man whose highly regarded personal achievement is reflected in this handsome home.

8. Significance

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

Specific dates 1874-75 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The J.N.B. Crim House at Elk City, Barbour County, West Virginia is significant because it is a well-preserved and unique example of Italiante-style architecture in this area, and, because it is associated with a prominent citizen of local 19th-century society in the environment of a rural county seat.

Plans for the Crim House were drawn up by J.N.B. Crim in the late 1850's (using pattern books probably) and delayed because of the Civil War until the 1870's. N.N.B. Crim and wife, Almira Jane Hall Crim, had lived in a log dwelling house on this property for many years. John Nelson Hall, a prominent and wealthy farmer on Elk Creek had set aside one hundred acres of this farm for his son, Jasper L. Hall, and one hundred acres for his daughter, Almira. J.N.B. bought the deceased's acreage from this father-in-law to adjoin his wife's one hundred acre dowry. (The Hall farm is still in the family but the other Hall residences have disappeared.) Thus, the Crim residence is the only surviving testament of two prominent county families in this area.

It is also significant to note that there are deeds (1857 and 1873), giving one-fourth and three-fourth acre of the John Nelson Hall land at the southwest corner of the J.N.B. Crim 200 acre farm, to build a Methodist-Episcopal Church and cemetery. The White frame church (1872) and cemetery are in sight of the J.N.B. Crim house.

The citizens of Barbour county for whom the Elk City farm house was built, the Honorable J.N.B. Crim (Joseph Napoleon Bonaparte - 1835-1905), was born in Rockingham County, Virginia, and settled with his parents, Michael and Catherine Strickler Crim, in the early 1840's at Sugar Creek, Barbour County, West Virginia. He went into business and by 1861 owned stores at five locations in Barbour County. He organized, was president of, and on the Board of Directors of the Tygart Valley Bank. After its liquidation, he became president of the First National Bank in Philippi. He was Justice of the Peace, Mayor of Philippi, and member of the Constitutional Congress of West Virginia (1872). With his son, Edmund Hall Crim, he founded E.H. Crim and Company. Two of the most prominent brick multi-story buildings on Main Street, Philippi, Crim East and Crim West both since sold were built in the 1880's by him. A third was built by him and his son-in-law, Melville Peck. Crim Avenue (Main Street, Belington, West Virginia) is named for him. The Crim Memorial United Methodist Church, Philippi was built by him as a memorial to his wife. Upon his death the newspaper obituaries stated that he was "the foremost businessman and financier in the county."

9. Major Bibliographical References

Crim and Chesser Family Papers, 14 N. Walnut Street, Philippi, WV.

Maxwell, Hu. History of Barbour County, 1899.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 2 acres

Quadrangle name Philippi, WV

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	7	5	7	6	12	0	4	33	12	9	20
Zone	Easting			Northing							

B

Zone	Easting			Northing							

C

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D

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E

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification Located in a rectangle 425 feet x 150' beginning at the Elk City Cemetery and running 425 east along the N. edge of the Crim gravel road, north 125', thence 425 feet in a straight line to the Elk City Cemetery, thence 125' south to the gravel road.

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 Peggy Chesser Hadley

organization N/A

date February 1984

street & number Rt. 4, Box 714

telephone 304/348-0240

city or town Washington

state NC

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

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date June 29, 1984

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

Carl Drake

date 8/22/1984

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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After the death of his wife, the Crim house was sold in 1882 by J.N.B. Crim to George Washington Dickenson whose two sons tragically died of diptheria within a week of each other in the 1890's. Hu Maxwell, in his 1899 Barbour County History remarks about the "splendid Dickenson monument at the Elk City cemetery and the mansion house nearby." G.W. Dickenson died in 1904 and by 1914, Edmund Hall Crim and Cora Mae Crim Peck had bought back their father's farm and home. Present owners are Peggy Chesser Hadley and Julia Chesser Martine, great granddaughters of J.N.B. Crim.

The Crim House is significant because it represents a locally distinguished example of late 19th century architecture and because it reflects the philosophy of a locally prominent family whose influence on the community is very much in evidence a century later.