

PH 022 3604

10th Congressional District  
Robert G. Stephens, Jr.

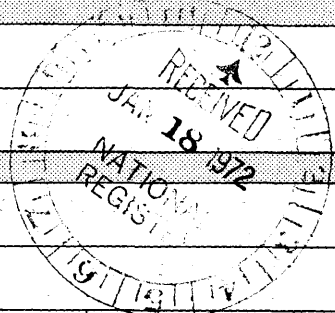
Form 10-300  
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: <b>Georgia</b>	
COUNTY: <b>Wilkes</b>	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER <b>APR 1 1 1972</b>	DATE



#### 1. NAME

COMMON:  
**Washington Presbyterian Church**

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
**Washington Presbyterian Church**

#### 2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**206 East Robert Toombs Avenue**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Washington**

STATE <b>Georgia</b>	CODE <b>13</b>	COUNTY: <b>Wilkes</b>	CODE <b>317</b>
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#### 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"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____

#### 4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
**Board of Trustees of the Washington Presbyterian Church**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**206 East Robert Toombs Avenue**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Washington**

STATE:  
**Georgia**

CODE:  
**13**

#### 5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
**Office of Clerk of Superior Court, Wilkes County**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**Court Street**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Washington**

STATE:  
**Georgia**

CODE:  
**13**

#### 6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
**Historic American Buildings Survey**

DATE OF SURVEY: **1936**     Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
**Library of Congress**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**Washington**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Washington**

STATE:  
**D.C.**

CODE:  
**08**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: **Georgia**

COUNTY: **Wilkes**

ENTRY NUMBER: **APR 1 1 1972**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

DATE: **08**

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

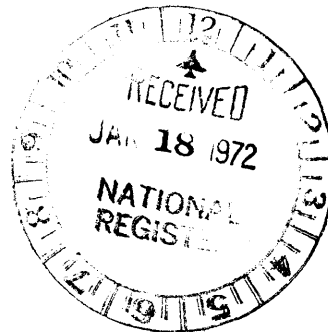
The Washington Presbyterian Church is a simple, well-proportioned, white clapboard meeting house with a multi-stage steeple. Except for the addition of a columned porch about 1890 on the exterior and the replacement of the old pews on the interior, it is essentially the structure completed c. 1836. The present auditorium of the church, its oldest part, was built in 1825 as a simple rectangular building. About 1836 the two-stage steeple was added along with a vestibule and pulpit. The columned portico was built considerably later, sometime before the end of the nineteenth century. The over-all form of the building remains generally that of the eighteenth-century, Wren-Gibbs type of church.

The entrance to the church is through a porch that is made up of a rectangular parapet supported on fluted Doric columns. Beyond this porch the gabled end of the main body of the building with its oval window and the facade of the ante-bellum structure are clearly visible. An elliptical fan light and side lights enclosed in fluted pilasters frame the double entrance doors. The form of the simple, molded, round-arched windows on either side of the door is repeated in smaller windows in the two stages of the steeple.

Above the square base of the steeple with its fine triglyph frieze, a hexagonal section supports the shingled steeple. On both sides of the building arched windows of handblown glass, framed by their original shutters, light the interior. The molded frames of these windows are similar to those of the facade that was added in 1836, suggesting that even though the church was built in two stages, there was one original plan. The refinement of proportions and details on both interior and exterior indicates a builder-designer of some competence despite the lack of any statement in the church records that would provide his name.

Inside the auditorium is a rectangular space with wainscoted and pilastered walls. The pulpit with its classical details is set within an elliptical arched opening. Doors that lead into back rooms on either side of the pulpit alcove have semi-circular fan lights that repeat the shape of the windows along the sides. The delicate wooden tracery in the arches of the windows is similar to that of the oval window in the facade gable. The interior space and detailing thus echo the classic simplicity of the exterior.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



**8. 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) 1825, c.1836, c.1890

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <u>History</u> |
| <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 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 Washington Presbyterian Church is a significant Georgia example of the New England Wren-Gibbs type meeting house. Frederick D. Nichols in The Early Architecture of Georgia points out the similarity in its over-all form between this small church and the earlier Savannah Independent Presbyterian Church designed by John Holden Greene of Rhode Island. The distinction of the Washington Church is the result of its well-proportioned and considered composition of the traditional elements of this form, portico, gabled body, and steeple of varied profile. Fine details such as the triglyph frieze in the steeple and pilastered doorway whose elliptical fan light is echoed by an oval opening in the gable, animate the classical simplicity of its basic form. There are few more important examples of the New England Meeting House type of church in Georgia.\* (\*William R. Mitchell, Director of Georgia Historic Sites Survey, has reported that this is the finest example he has found in the state.)

In addition to its architectural significance the history of the Washington Presbyterian Church is linked to the early development of the Presbyterian movement in northeast Georgia. The church's first minister was John Springer, who came to Wilkes County in 1788 to open a school and became the first minister to be ordained in Georgia. This event, held under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery of South Carolina, took place July 22, 1790, under a poplar tree on the Gilbert lands in what is now the northern portion of Washington. As the Georgia Historical Commissions marker in front of the church points out, many famous ministers, among them Alexander H. Webster, S.J. Cassels, Francis R. Goulding, H.W. Petrie, Nathan Hoyt, J.K.S. Axson, and Thomas Dunwoody, have been pastors of the Washington Presbyterian Church. Alexander H. Stephens, befriended by Reverend Webster, and Duncan G. Campbell were lifelong members of this church, as were also many other distinguished men and women.

Even though the early Washington Presbyterian Church session records do not contain the details of its planning that the architectural historian would like to have, the chronology of its construction has been preserved in various historical accounts and in deed records. The first section of the church building went up sometime between July 19, 1825, when Dr. Joel Abbott conveyed the land to the trustees, and September 10, 1825, when an agreement for a fence between Abbott's remaining lands and the church lot was concluded. Dr. Abbott, who lived at the time in the house on East Robert Toombs Avenue later occupied by Robert Toombs, owned the land along the present East Robert Toombs Avenue to the street which now runs by the west side of the church. As his donation of \$200 to the church he conveyed the present church lot to the trustees, Thomas Terrell, Samuel Barnett, Andrew G. Semmes, Constantine Church and James Wingfield. The agreement of six weeks later

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Addison W. Simpson, Life and Service of Reverend John Springer, including some early history of the Presbyterian Church in Northeast Georgia.  
 Eliza A. Bowen, The Story of Wilkes County, Georgia (Marietta, 1950).  
 Writer's Project, W.P.A., The Story of Washington-Wilkes (Athens, 1941).  
 Reverend Stewart H. Lond, "Sesquicentennial of Presbyterian Church at Washington, Georgia," Christian Observer (October 23, 1940).  
 Frederick D. Nichols, Early Architecture of Georgia (Chapel Hill, 1957).  
 Willis C. Lindsey, A History of Washington-Wilkes County, Georgia, bound typescript, 1955.  
 Elizabeth A. Lyon, personal inspection July, September, 1971.

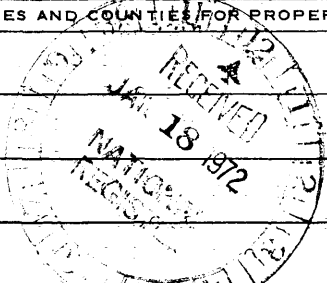
**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

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	° ' "	° ' "		33 ° 44 ' 8"	82° 44' 10"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **0.73 acres**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



NO UTM  
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 SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
**Dr. Elizabeth A. Lyon, consultant for Washington-Wilkes Historic Foundation**

ORGANIZATION: **Department of the History of Art** DATE: **October 25, 1971**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**Emory University**

CITY OR TOWN: **Atlanta** STATE: **Georgia** CODE: **13**

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

<p>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:</p> <p>National <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name <u>Mary Gregory Junot</u></p> <p>Title <u>State Liaison Officer</u></p> <p>Date <u>January 12, 1972</u></p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p><u>Robert M. Utley</u>                  Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</p> <p>Date <u>4/11/72</u></p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p><u>William M. Sturges</u>                  Keeper of The National Register</p> <p>Date <u>APR 11 1972</u></p>
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

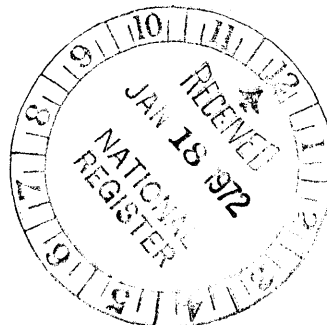
STATE	
Georgia	
COUNTY	
Wilkes	
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(Number all entries) 8. Significance

required that the trustees maintain a fence between Dr. Abbott's property and the "lot on which their church now stands." The first construction included only the nave, a rectangular structure with two front entrances and rough benches for seating the men on one side, the women on the other.

In 1827 with a church membership swelled by the addition of the county church congregations of Smyrna and Providence Churches to 100 persons, Alexander H. Webster was made full-time pastor. His term was to begin in 1828. Webster, who had come to Washington as rector of the Academy, had been ordained to the ministry in April, 1824 and had been supervisor of the church from that time. In October of 1827, however, Webster, who had conducted protracted revival meetings during the previous summer, died. His brokenhearted congregation buried him between the steps that led down from the two front entrances. When the vestibule, pulpit and spire were added to the building during Reverend S.J. Cassel's ministry 1832-1837, a slab on a cenotaph was placed in the vestibule over Webster's grave. This monument still stands inside the entrance to the church. Shortly before the end of the nineteenth century, the porch was added to the building and in 1940 Sunday School rooms were put up in the rear.

The Washington Presbyterian Church remains today an interesting nineteenth-century structure with its old organ now electrically instead of manually pumped, two of the oil lamps that once lighted the auditorium on stands flanking the pulpit and its offering plates made from the wood of the historic Presbyterian poplar tree. In 1971 it continues to serve the present congregation as well as to provide a visual introduction to the early nineteenth-century buildings of the East Robert Toombs district.



STATE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT OF GEORGIA  
DIVISION OF HIGHWAY PLANNING  
IN COOPERATION WITH  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

CITY MAP  
**WASHINGTON**  
WILKES COUNTY

SCALE IN FEET  
0 660 1320  
POPULATION 4440 (1960)  
1969



G.M.D. 164

G.M.D. 179

