

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

For NPS use only

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

received **MAR 19 1986**

date entered

APR 28 1986

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*

Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Judge John W. Wright Cottage

and/or common "Wisteria Cottage"

2. Location

street & number 305 South Green Street

not for publication

city, town Berkeley Springs N/A vicinity of

state West Virginia code 54 county Morgan code 065

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input 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 checked="" 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	<u>N/A</u> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input 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 Grace Rogers Cooper

street & number Route 9

city, town Great Cacapon vicinity of state West Virginia

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Morgan County Courthouse

street & number N. Washington and Fairfax Streets

city, town Berkeley Springs state West Virginia

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

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date N/A

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Judge John W. Wright Cottage is located at 305 South Green Street (though facing in the direction of Mercer Street) in Berkeley Springs, Morgan County, West Virginia.

The cottage sits on the eastern hillside overlooking the main downtown area of Berkeley Springs. The house is a two story frame residence of board and batten construction in the late Italianate style. The first floor appears to be somewhat larger than the second, having a three-sided Victorian-era veranda and a one story gable roofed kitchen wing (with a rear porch) which, though physically attached to the first floor is, in fact, a separate structure that was attached to the house c.1900. The cottage has a simple hipped roof, from near the center of which rises a high corbeled brick chimney. Two other corbeled chimneys rise from the first floor roofs. The eaves of the roof are wide and are supported on all sides by very heavy scroll-type brackets, the most prominent decorative feature of the cottage. The brackets have a rather unusual arrangement; the brackets in the eaves are of two sizes, one size being twice the length of the other. The larger brackets are widely spaced, and between them are sets of two and then three and again three, then two of the smaller brackets. This tends to give the bracketed eaves a rather rhythmic effect. The facade openings are three ranked at each elevation, and second floor windows have six over six lights. Functional wooden shutters flank all windows.

The three sided veranda that is the most prominent feature of the first floor exterior are upheld by typically Italianate posts. One unusual aspect of the cottage, however, concerns these posts. Rather than all the posts being of the exact same type, as is typical, the posts along the front elevation of the veranda are simple turned, or "natural" posts, while those along the two side elevations are chamfered rectangular posts. These posts were boxed-in earlier in this century, although restoration to their original appearance is underway. Metal railings along the veranda, another 20th century innovation, are being removed.

There is a bay window on the first floor that graces the dining room. The seven original windows of the first floor are very high and rather narrow, so as to allow for full ventilation during summer months.

The interior floor plan is simple, as the building is basically rectangular. The first floor is divided into three basic rooms (excluding the bath and wash room area); library, parlor, and dining room that may all be entered from the commodious entrance hall. A delicately turned wood spiral staircase leads to the second floor, which contains four bedrooms of nearly equal size.

An important landscape feature of the property is the wisteria that, despite several 20th century cuttings, grows freely about the house and provides the veranda with shade, and the house with a common local name. The wisteria was apparently part of the original landscape features of the Wright property.

The Judge John W. Wright Cottage is the only remaining Italianate cottage in Berkeley Springs and, sitting on the hill overlooking this once famed resort, is one of the area's most significant architectural landmarks.

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 type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1872 **Builder/Architect** Not Known

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Judge John W. Wright Cottage, located at 305 South Green Street, Berkeley Springs, Morgan County, West Virginia, is significant for having been home to John B. Wright, an influential Nineteenth century Federal jurist and associate for Lincoln;¹ as well as for being an excellent example of Italianate residential architecture in a resort setting.²

Explanatory Notes

1. John W. Wright rose to prominence in Indiana politics as a member of the democratic party, serving in local and state legislative office. However, in the tumultuous times leading up to the outbreak of the Civil War, Wright joined the new and growing republican party which quickly came to dominate Indiana politics and, in 1859, was elected to a state judgeship. He was a leading member of the Indiana delegation to the Republican National Convention of 1860, a delegation that, after some negotiation, was solidly for Abraham Lincoln and contributed significantly to his nomination for president. In recognition of his services, Wright was appointed a judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals by President Lincoln.

In 1871 Judge Wright acquired property in Berkeley Springs, then a fashionable "summer retreat" for Washingtonians, and the following year built the cottage as his "summer cottage" until his retirement from the federal bench in 1883, at which time he took up permanent residence there with his wife Mary. The Wrights occupied the house until the mid-1890s. The cottage was for many years the home of educator Lillie Rockwell, who served as a missionary to India.

The lot on which the cottage stands is also of some local historical significance, having belonged at various times to Lord Fairfax and members of his family, to Henry Whiting (a cousin of George Washington), and to David Hunter Strother, Union general during the Civil War and, as "Porte Crayon", famed Nineteenth century writer and illustrator.

2. The Judge Wright Cottage is an excellent example of Italianate residential architecture in the small community of Berkeley Springs. Berkeley Springs has flourished, during several periods, as a summer resort for those seeking to escape the heat of Washington and other low lying coastal areas and to "take the waters" at the mineral springs located here. One such period was after the close of the Civil War, when many prominent Washingtonians built "summer cottages" at Berkeley Springs. The most striking example is the Suit Cottage, also called "The Castle" (listed on the National Register November 28, 1980) which overlooks the community and is a local tourist attraction. Judge John W. Wright, as recounted above, built one such residence here in 1872. Most of the "summer cottages" that once dotted the hills around the resort are either gone or have been so radically altered as to be unrecognizable.

The Judge Wright Cottage, by contrast, is marvelously intact. Although there have been some minor alterations over the years, such as the boxing-in of porch posts, these are in the process of being restored to their original appearance by the present owner. The house

9. Major Bibliographical References

The Morgan Messenger, Berkeley Springs, W.Va., various issues
Newbraugh, Frederick T., Warm Springs Echoes about Berkeley Springs and Morgan County,
3 vols, Berkeley Springs, W.Va., Morgan Messenger, 1976
Correspondence from Grace R. Cooper to R.S. Collins and M.J. Pauley,

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .359 acre

Quadrangle name Stotlers Crossroads, W.Va.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	7	7	3	7	9	4	0	4	3	8	9	5	4	0
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

(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 Michael J. Pauley, Historian

organization Hart and Pauley

date January 28, 1986

street & number 4651 Victoria Road

telephone (304) 744-9342

city or town Charleston

state West Virginia

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 3-13-86

For NPS use only

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

date 4/28/86

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet Judge John W. Wright

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Cottage

itself is a lovely two story Italianate residence, having been constructed as that style of architecture was passing from the scene. The house bears some striking resemblances to "small country houses" described in the famous architectural pattern books of Andrew Jackson Downing published in the 1840s and 50s, although whether in fact, Judge Wright used such a pattern book is in doubt. The style was a popular one, whose disappearance would be heralded by the financial panic of 1873, so that the judge would have had many examples to draw upon. For a more detailed treatment of the architectural features of the cottage, see Part 7.

The Judge Wright Cottage is, then significant as an excellent late example of its architectural style in this former "resort" town, and one of the few remaining structures that can be readily identified with the post-Civil War summer resort period in this community. It is also significant for its historical association with John W. Wright, noted jurist of the 19th century.

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Continuation sheet Judge Wright Cottage

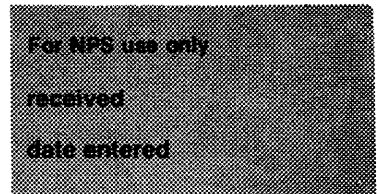
Item number 9

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Historic Preservation Unit Files, Department of Culture & History, Charleston.
West Virginia Heritage Encyclopedia, Richwood, W.Va., Comstock, publisher, 1975

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Judge John W. Wright

Continuation sheet

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Verbal Boundary Description

The Judge Wright Cottage is situated at the center of a rectangular lot that is .359 of an acre in area. The rectangular lot begins at a point on the east side of Mercer Street 45' south of the southeastern corner of Mercer and Market Streets; thence in a line 165' east to the western side of Green Street; thence south 95' along the western side of Green Street; thence in a line 165' west to the eastern side of Mercer Street; thence 95' north along the eastern side of Mercer Street to the point of beginning; this being the central portion of Lots 11, 12, 21, and 22 the original 1776 survey of Bath.

Contributing /Noncontributing Resources

Contributing resources (bldg.)	-	1
Noncontributing resources	-	0
<u>Total</u> contributing resources	-	1