

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>Virginia</b>	
COUNTY: <b>Rockbridge</b>	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
**Washington and Lee University Historic District**

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
**Washington and Lee University Historic District**

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**Washington and Lee University**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Lexington**

STATE <b>Virginia</b>	CODE <b>51</b>	COUNTY: <b>Rockbridge</b>	CODE <b>163</b>
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**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <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	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 checked="" 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 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**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**Washington and Lee University**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Lexington**

STATE: <b>Virginia</b>	CODE <b>51</b>
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**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
**Rockbridge County Court House**

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Lexington**

STATE: <b>Virginia</b>	CODE <b>51</b>
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**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

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

DATE OF SURVEY: **1934**     Federal     State     County     Local

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

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Washington**

STATE: <b>D.C.</b>	CODE <b>11</b>
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: <b>Virginia</b>	COUNTY: <b>Rockbridge</b>	ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
			FOR NPS USE ONLY

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7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

Excellent     Good     Fair     Deteriorated     Ruins     Unexposed

(Check One)

Altered     Unaltered

(Check One)

Moved     Original Site

(Check One)

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" 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 historic core of Washington and Lee University is situated along a ridge which extends through the western edge of the town of Lexington. The principal feature of this core is a range of brick buildings referred to as the "Colonnade", since the buildings are fronted variously with columns, piers, and pilasters, giving the impression of a continuous colonnade. In the center of the Colonnade is the oldest and largest building of the group, Washington Hall - a three-story, temple-form structure fronted by a provincial hexastyle Roman Doric portico. Washington Hall was erected in 1824; its present roofline and two-story flanking wings were added in 1843. The octagonal Greek-Revival cupola, topped with a wooden statue of George Washington was added in 1844. The statue, carved by a local cabinet maker, Matthew Kahle, is a fine example of American folk art. Washington Hall's flanking wings, fronted with coupled Doric pilasters, link the building to two matching rectangular structures. The southern building, Payne Hall, was erected in 1831, while its compliment, Robinson Hall, was completed in 1843. Both buildings feature unpedimented hexastyle porticoes with square piers and are crowned by shallow deck-on-hip roofs. This complex of ante-bellum structures at one time contained nearly all the institution's facilities, but it now houses only administrative offices, faculty offices, and classrooms. All of the original interior fabric of the buildings was replaced in 1936 during an extensive renovation.

Aligned with this central group are two additional buildings, now considered part of the Colonnade. The south building, Newcomb Hall, is a late-nineteenth century structure, restyled in the twentieth century with a Doric portico to conform with the earlier buildings. The three-story building on the north, Tucker Hall, was erected in 1935, in the Doric temple-form to house the Law School.

Farther down the hill, towards the east, and facing Washington Hall on axis is the famous Lee Chapel, built under the direction of Robert E. Lee in 1868. In 1870, this small brick building, with its simplified Romanesque elements, became the final resting place of the institution's most famous president.

Beyond each of the terminal buildings of the Colonnade, and halfway down the hill is a pair of faculty dwellings. All four houses were completed in 1843 according to similar plans, with two-story temple forms and one-story wings, although the outermost houses have shallow hipped roofs, while the remaining two have pedimented roofs. Each of the tetrastyle porticoes on the houses displays the same provincial Roman Doric order found on Washington Hall.

South of the southernmost faculty house, is a rambling two-story brick house with a hipped roof, built in 1869 as the president's house, and first occupied by Robert E. Lee.

The collection of academic, religious, and residential buildings here described constitute the historic core of Washington and Lee University. Other structures, mostly Georgian Revival-style, have been built in the vicinity during the present century, but they are discreetly placed and detract little from the visual quality of the area.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |  |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |  |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education   | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <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 historic core of Washington and Lee University is composed of a collection of architecturally harmonious and spatially related neo-classical buildings that together form one of the most dignified and beautiful college campuses in the nation. The central and most significant element of this complex, the "Colonnade", along with the flanking faculty residences, gives the impression of being the product of a single architectural concept, but in reality this splendid succession of columned and pilastered buildings is an evolutionary product of a building program, extending over nearly one hundred and fifty years. As the school grew, its administrators and builders successfully used this growth as a means to enhance the visual unity of the institution without falling into monotony. The first buildings erected in 1803 by what was then Washington College, have long since disappeared. It is, however, the oldest of the existing buildings, Washington Hall, erected in 1824, which sets the architectural tone of the campus. Its builder-architect, John Jordan, was a self taught designer of much ability. Jordan was able to transform the prevailing architectural fashion of the time into a sturdy, local idiom. The principal departures at Washington and Lee from Jordan's simple classicism - the Lee Chapel and the President's House - do not detract from the unity of the area, but serve as interesting foils to it.

While the modern university plant extends well beyond the historic core, the ante bellum buildings have remained the visual symbol and psychological heart of this venerable institution. The significance of the complex to nineteenth-century American architectural development was perhaps best expressed by Talbot Hamlin when he wrote: "No more impressive expression of the educational ideals of the time could be imagined than this Classic group, its pediment and orders seen through embowering trees, over swelling American lawns, its cupola crowned with the image of the Pater Patriae". Even though the individual buildings that make up Washington and Lee have gone through extensive changes in the course of their organic growth and development the integrity of the University complex as a whole has survived. The Lee Chapel was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1961 under the theme study of the Civil War. The evaluation of National significance should be extended to include all of the historic core of the University.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				<b>O R</b>	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES				
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE				
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds		
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"	°	'	"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"	°	'	"
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"	°	'	"
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"	°	'	"

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

ORGANIZATION \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

STREET AND NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY OR TOWN: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ CODE \_\_\_\_\_

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

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 \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation*

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Keeper of The National Register*

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS