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

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

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

# Name

Humphry Marshall House historic

Marshall House; Marshall's Garden; Marshall's Arboretum; Botany Farm and or common

#### 2. Location

state

1407 South Strasburg Road (PA 162) street & number

code

West Chester (P.O.) city, town Marshallton, West Bradford ---- vicinity of

42

### Pennsylvania Classification 3.

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
district	public	<u> </u>	agriculture	museum
<u>X</u> building(s)	<u> </u>	unoccupied	commercial	park
structure	both	work in progress	educational	<u>_x</u> private residence
site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	entertainment	religious
object	n/a in process	<u> </u>	government	scientific
-	n/a being considered	yes: unrestricted	industrial	transportation
	-	no	military	other:

county

Chester

#### **Owner of Property** 4.

Chester County Historical Society, Roland Woodward, Executive Director name

225 North High Street street & number

city, town	West Chester	vicinity of	state	Pennsylvania
5. Lo	cation of Leg	gal Descripti	on	·····
courthouse, r	registry of deeds, etc. Cl	nester County Courtho	ouse	
street & num	ber High and Marl	tet Streets		
city, town	West Chester		state	Pennsylvania
6. Re	presentation	n in Existing	Surveys	
title Histor	ric American Building	gs Survey has this pr	operty been determined e	eligible? yes _ <sup>x</sup> no
<b>date</b> 1957	(Pa 203)		federal st	ate county local
depository fo	or survey records Libra	ary of Congress		
city, town	Washington		state	DC

OMB No. 1024-0018 Expires 10-31-87

n/a not for publication

code

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# 7. Description

Condition		Check one			
X excellent	deteriorated	unaltered			
good	ruins	<u>X</u> altered			
fair	unexposed				

Check one \_\_\_\_\_ original site \_\_\_\_\_ moved date .

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Located in the village of Marshallton in West Bradford Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania, the Marshall property relates to a group of three buildings and a garden. These include 1) a stone mansion built in 1773-1774, and enlarged before 1801; 2) its new west (service) wing built in 1949; 3) a frame barn, built c. 1880; and 4) a bontanical garden. These components are in the southeast corner of a fifty-acre tract in an area comprising about two and a half acres. Situated north of the Strasburg Road on a slight rise, the mansion is barely within view of Marshallton Meeting (1865) and the west end of the village; tall trees in the garden south of the house have long obliterated such a prospect. The barn is north and east of the mansion, close to the property bounds and the garden lies immediately south of the house. All exist in a special landscape.

### Mansion

The mansion, enhanced by an ashlar facade, was built as a two-and-a-half story dwelling and workplace, the conformation of which was determined by a unique use of the four-room, side-passage plan.<sup>1</sup> In this particular version of the plan, a double-pile, two-bay unit is attached to a three-bay side-passage unit, the whole integrated within the outside walls and entirely roofed over with a continuous ridge. The building is most clearly read as a house-and-a-half, the double-pile, two-bay west unit reading as a "half" section and the three-bay, four-room east unit as the principal section. On the south elevation the smaller unit is marked not only by well-placed wide windows--8/12 on the second floor and 12/12 on the first floor--but also by a glazed grade-level door element which originally served as the only entrance to a plant room or conservatory. The larger unit features a corresponding sense of fenestration, the second floor area centered by a marble datestone, balanced below by a door frame which incorporates a four-light transom. The north elevation is marked by a less formal bay division with fewer windows in each unit and the two-door opening set off-center to accommodate interior relationships.

Nineteenth century graphic documents show that c. 1849, a jettied frame, secondfloor shed extended from the stone facade, presumably to provide the necessary viewing options for an eighteenth century observatory, here the so-called long room. The grade-level conservatory door is also recorded in 1849 and c. 1872, as is also a shed-roofed porch (removed, c. 1890<sup>2</sup>) together with a one-story west wing, treated (probably inaccurately) as stone in 1849 and, more realistically, stone and frame c. 1872. The framed south wall of the west wing extends forward of the west window in the original kitchen.

The plan separates the 1774 mansion into a living area (the principal east section) and a service area (the west section). A thick stone wall divides the two as does a change in floor level from the living section down to the original kitchen. Front entrance into the living section is gained from the south into the main parlor, the space traditionally described as the work space of the

1600–1699 1700–1799 1800–1899	Areas of Significance—C archeology-prehistoric archeology-historic X agriculture architecture art commerce communications	community planning conservation economics education	music	e religion ∑ science sculpture social/ humanitarian theater transportation other (specify)
Specific dates	1773-1813	Builder/Architect H	umphry Marshall	

### 1773-1813 Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Marshall House is a rare surviving example of a Pennsylvania country house that is built on the unusual four-room side passage plan. The house and gardens are largely intact and they still retain most of the original 18th century features. This unique construction by one of the two earliest American botanists is the only known surviving example of an 18th century laboratory that was designed as an integral part of a farm house and garden along with a working farm. The heated conservatory and specimen room on the second floor are largely untouched and show many features of the botanical profession as it was practiced then.

As a clear reminder of a singular and influential early Republican lifestyle which refers to the later life of a significant natural scientist, and as a home and garden site each retaining distinguishable characteristics, the Humphry Marshall House and its garden hold significance relative to architecture, agriculture (horticulture) and science. The Humphry Marshall property refers to a unique rural Delaware Valley homestead built in 1773-1774 by and for a masonbotanist who became internationally renowned as a pioneer purveyor of bontanicals and author of Arbustum Americanum, the first account of forest trees and shrubs native to the United States. From 1774 to 1801, the mansion and its immediate environs were the home, office, warehouse, conservatory, and garden laboratory of Humphry Marshall (1722-1801), farmer, miller, mason, amateur astronomer, Quaker and naturalist-nurseryman. The garden adjacent to the mansion on the south identified the site of the larger of America's two surviving colonial botanic gardens. Together, the mansion and the garden reflect one man's influence on the development of science in the early years of the early American Republic. Largely because of his work at this home place, Marshall was elected to membership in the American Philosphical Society in 1785--when Benjamin Franklin was president--and, in 1786, to honorary membership in the Philadelphia Society for Promoting Agriculture--the latter an organization which provided a forum for Marshall's advocating national self-sufficiency through forest conservation and scientific farming. Both house and garden derive national significance from their association with Humphry Marshall. The garden, by its rare survivorship and its prototypical reference to the mail order nursery business, also holds national significance. And the mansion itself embodies distinctive characteristics in and of itself and of the Delaware Valley's four-room, side-passage plan,<sup>14</sup> a mid-eighteenth century phenomemon which contributed to comfortably informal spacial relationships. In this particular case, the plan provides idiosyncratic function for structural elements as well as spaces.

From 1748 to 1773, Humphry Marshall had managed the family homestead on the Brandywine where he incorporated a greenhouse,  $^{15}$  perhaps the earliest such combination of a dwelling and laboratory in Pennsylvania. When Abraham Marshall

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

10. Geographica	al Data			
Acreage of nominated property 2	.559			
Quadrangle nameUnionville,	PA		Quadrangle scale1:24,000	
UT M References				
A     1     8     4     4     1     7     8     5     4     4     4       Zone     Easting     North     Nor<	2 <sub>1</sub> 2 <u>1</u> 8 <sub>1</sub> 0 ng	B Zone	Easting Northing	
		D		
		F		
		н		
Verbal boundary description and	justification			
	SEE CONTIN	NUATION SHEET		
List all states and counties for p	roperties over	lapping state or co	ounty boundaries	
state	code	county	code	
state	code	county	code	
11. Form Prepar	ed By			
		ural Historian	edited by Carolyn Pitts	n di secolo
organization National Park Ser	vice, Histor	y Division dat	te December 15, 1986	
street & number 1100 L Street,	<u>NW</u>	tele	lephone (202)343-8166	
clty or town Washington		sta	ate DC 20013	
<b>12. State Histor</b>	ic Pres	ervation (	<b>Officer Certification</b>	n
The evaluated significance of this pro	perty within the	state is:		
national	state	local		
As the designated State Historic Pres 665), I hereby nominate this property according to the criteria and procedu State Historic Preservation Officer sig	for inclusion in t res set forth by t	the National Register a		<b>}</b> -
	<u>,</u>			
title			date	
For NPS use only I hereby certify that this proper	y is included in t	the National Register		
a the second			date	
Keeper of the National Register				
Attest:		19 - Ann an Anna an gu an an ta Shangar ta sanan ar gu an an Shat Bannah Ana	date	
Chief of Registration				





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original owner.<sup>3</sup> The west side fireplace is enhanced by a period gougeworkornamented surround, installed between 1932 and 1934 when the then owner reduced the size of the eighteenth century fireplace. The original stone hearth survives, however, as does evidence for cupboards having dominated the fireplace wall. Although the room now extends through the depth of the building, regularly spaced nailhole evidence in the floor, shy of the doors, shows where a board partition, recorded <u>in situ</u>, as late as 1894,<sup>4</sup> originally separated the side-plan passage from the principal parlor. The steep closed-string stair in the side-passage area relates to the north wall where its paneled spandrel integrated into the paneling of a cupboard (or closet) which partially boxes the staircase, obscuring the quarter landing and the upper six treads. All are original features.

On the first floor two back-to-back parlors, each featuring a corner fireplace, mark the east end of the original four-room section. The southeast parlor, with its segmentally arched chimney cupboard, matching the arched fireplace face, is surrounded by narrow fielded paneling. The northeast parlor is treated similarly.

Of major significance is the masonry mass which rises from the fireplace of the principal parlor space through to the far west wall. Incorporating flues which serve the fireplace in this room and the fireplace of the original kitchen, this element is capable of heating the north wall of the original conservatory as well as the north wall of the original long room and observatory. Such service is especially significant for safe year-round use of the conservatory, originally built as a segregated space when it was accessible only from its south door. Evidence of two openings in the back wall of the fireplace suggests that the conservatory was also provided with supplemental heat which could radiate from an oven and perhaps even a stove, as recorded in 1849.<sup>5</sup>

The original west wing, a second generation kitchen, is depicted graphically as early as 1849 and documented earlier in the inventory of the original owner in 1801, when the original kitchen was referenced as "the back room below stairs." In this old but adjunct space is another uniquely structured element--an oversized masonry feature which occupies the entire west wall. Incorporated here are a cooking fireplace with two ample ovens that provide radiant heat for a kiln or drying cupboards, a narrow, deep space accessible only from the exterior, its door--still extant--is appropriately depicted in an 1872 watercolor.

The second floor follows the plan established by the first floor and the long room, so-called in the 1801 inventory offers another remarkable original element. Built into the masonry of the skewed flue is a deep four drawer specimen cabinet, well crafted in oak. A plate metal door provides overall cover.

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Missing today is the jettied observatory, recorded as falling into decay by 1867 and removed sometime between 1883 and 1894.<sup>6</sup> The garret, which provides access by a boxed quarter-turn stair entered from the side passage, runs the full length of the two-and-a-half-story portion of the mansion. Strut mounted poplar purlins, 51 feet long, provide intermedial support for the rafters, indicating undisturbed original construction.

Renovations performed after 1946, when Campbell Weir was the owner, included reroofing the summer kitchen and installing dormers when adding a bathroom. This, together with the c. 1834-incorporation of a bathroom in the living section, created a narrow passage access to the conservatory. The elimination of the porch and the jettied shed, constitute the major changes in plan which have been undertaken. In reference to the roof, other changes have occurred over three generations of renovations to the cornices and bargeboard/eaves with corresponding use of roofing materials but all changes in plan and fabric are clear to the educated eye; otherwise, enough remarkably unique features survive to provide a significant amount of information about the practical genius of the original owner.

The new west wing, a one and a half story frame unit connected to the first floor of the old house by a passage was built in 1949, by Charles Okie, Architect.<sup>7</sup> (Noncontributing)

The barn is a frame double-decker structure built on a conventional north-south axis. Constructed probably about 1880,<sup>8</sup> after the original family had sold the property, this had been sided with asbestos shingles by 1949.<sup>9</sup> Its south pound has long been unused and its cow house level converted to horse stalls accessible from the west. (Noncontributing)

The garden comprises approximately two acres in the south east corner of the estate.<sup>10</sup> Although no early record exists for the size of the garden or its contents, Robert Gutowski, horticulturalist and landscape historian, estimates that the garden, the mansion, and some outbuildings (of which there was a property total of six in 1798) probably occupied no more than two to three acres.<sup>11</sup> Some garden plants, including species described by the original owner in 1785 date to his time. Plants which appear to have survived from the eighteenth century include Sugar Maple, Yellow Buckeye, Cucumber Magnolia, Winter Aconite, and three varieties of boxwood which themselves provide clues as to arrangement and nature of the original garden planting.<sup>12</sup> (and it is) within acceptable limits for historic landscape preservation.<sup>13</sup> (Contributing)

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(1669-1767) died he left Humphry, the eighth of his nine children, with a considerable fortune, enabling this son to establish a mill on the Brandywine and to further his interests in natural science. It was at this time that Humphry Marshall, with the encouragement of his cousin John Bartram, began to correspond with amateur English botanists Peter Collinson (1693-1768) and Dr. John Fothergill (1712-1780). When he first built his twelve-room mansion two miles north of his birthplace, Marshall lived there with his wife of twenty years, Sarah Pennock (1720-1786). In 1788, the same year his Arbustum was translated into French, the widowed Marshall married Margaret Minshall (d. 1823). Because he was childless from both marriages, Marshall opened his ample home to "whichever of his thirty-seven nieces and nephews needed a home."<sup>16</sup> Among these were Moses Marshall (1758-1813) and Alice Pennock (1770-1841). The young couple married in 1797, by which time their uncle was nearly blinded by cataracts. Moses worked with his uncle and they continued as a part of the household, raising their children while Moses, a physician by training, continued as his uncle's partner. Sometimes he traveled to western Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Georgia filling orders for such clients as Sir Joseph Banks, president of the Royal Academy. Not only did Moses' choice emphasize the common bond between botany and medicine; it also emphasized the older man's influence on the younger generation. In 1791, both men were recognized by J. C. D. Schreber in his new edition of Linnaeus'  $\frac{Genera Plantarum}{As heir to his}$  when he named a genus of the composite family "Marshallia.:<sup>17</sup> As heir to his uncle's enterprise. Moses continued to fill orders and tend the garden until he died in 1813.

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During the last quarter of the eighteenth century, Humphry Marshall not only correponded with and sold seeds and specimens to such British collectors and dissemenators as Dr. Fothergill, he also served King Louis XVI of France and scholars in Holland, Germany, Belgium, and Italy, sometimes with his friend Benjamin Franklin serving as intermediary. As a consequence, Marshall added old world specimens to his own collection, as he also supplied the gardens of Europe with plants from the new world. From D.r Fothergill he also received a telescope, a microscope, and a thermometer.<sup>18</sup> In addition to collecting from early travels in the colonies, he drew also from the bontanical collection of his first cousin John Bartram (1699-1777) whose garden in Kingsessing near Philadelphia, established in 1728, today represents the other of two surviving colonial botanic gardens.

Marshall's reown in Europe also drew him to the attention of like-minded Americans, including the Rev. Henry Muhlenberg, the "father of American Botany" and William Hamilton, gentleman grandson of Philadelphia lawyer Andrew Hamilton. William Hamilton exchanged many plants with Marshall when he was developing Woodlands, his Philadelphia area estate, perhaps the greatest example of English (Romantic) landscape in America.<sup>19</sup>



In his garden Marshall planted an acorn from a Bartram yellow oak (Quercus heterophylla), a hybrid discovered by the elder naturalist, and he planted winter aconites, also from Bartram's garden.<sup>20</sup> Other species which he cultivated included boxwood, rhododendron, black birch, and some of the first specimens of Ailanthus planted in America.<sup>21</sup>

From 1823 to 1876, Humphrey Marshall, the bachelor son of Moses and Alice Marshall, lived on the place, fencing the garden but not otherwise tending the space. By 1849 the place was described as having a large number of trees but otherwise as a wilderness.<sup>22</sup> The property remained in the Marshall family, both mansion and garden relatively untended, until 1881, when Robert B. Lilley purchased the home and about thirty acres.<sup>23</sup> The descent of title went then to Lilley's son, Walter Lilley, and later reverted to Robert's possession; then, in 1932, to J. Elliot Newlin; in 1936, to Francis A. Hathaway; and finally, in 1946, to Campbell Weir who willed his estate to the Chester County Historical Society in 1982.<sup>24</sup>

### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>Professor Bernard L. Herman, University of Delaware, is currently studying the relationship of house plans to eighteenth century material culture. He has identified at least five other examples of the four-room, side-passage plan in Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia. These include "Mt. Jones," New Castle County, Delaware (1760); "Willowdale," Cecil County, Maryland (1770); and "Poplar Hill," Northampton County, Virginia (1780).

 $^{2}$ A photograph taken by R. S. Redfield in 1884, records the porch and jettied shed intact, but a subsequent photograph, taken by Gilbert Cope in 1894, shows both elements missing.

<sup>3</sup>"His Old Trees: Humphry Marshall's Garden is Still Extant," <u>Philadelphia Times</u>, June 3, 1894.

<sup>4</sup>Philadelphia Times, June 3, 1894.

<sup>5</sup>William Darlington, Memorial of John Bartram and Humphry Marshall (1849), p. 487.

 $6_{\rm MS}$  28309 (c. 1900); Society Collection, Chester County Historical Society, see also note 2.

<sup>7</sup>Campbell Weir Collection, Chester County Historical Society, Box 10, File 10.

 $^{8}$ This assumption is based on the information provided by the chain of title and the barn structure itself.





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Bibliography

### Primary Sources:

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[Chester County Court of Common Pleas], Paper Book of Defendents in Error: Error to the Common Pleas of Chester County, Aqualla Marshall (Plaintiff in Error) v. Marshall Palmer et al, (Defendents in Error).

[Chester County Court of Common Pleas] Paper book of Plaintiff in Error: Error to the Common Pleas of Chester County: Aquilla Marshall (Plaintiff in Error) v. Marshall Palmer et al (Defendents in Error, 1877).

[Chester County Orphans Court] "An Inventory of the Goods and Chattels rights and credits of Humphry Marshall....," File 4886, filed Chester County Clerk of Orphans Court, December 22, 1801.

[Chester County Orphans Court] "An Inventory of the Goods and Chattels rights and credits of Moses Marshall, Esq....," File 5946, filed October 24, 1813.

[Chester County Orphans Court] "An Inventory of the Goods and Chattels rights and credits which were Margaret marshall's...," file #7316, filed August 19, 1823.

"Record of Proceedings in The Common Pleas Court: Marshall v. Palmer et at." <u>Daily Local News</u>, February 24, 1880.

U.S. Bureau of Internal Revenue. Particular List or Description of Each Dwelling House which, with the outhouses appartenant thereto, and Lot on which same are erected...[as] owned, possessed or occupied in the First Day of October, 1798 in the Township of East and West Bradford... County of Chester... exceeding in value the sum of One Hundred Dollars. NARS RG58, Microfilm Reel 372-7, on file Chester County Historical Society as R-V6-T-3-Reel 1, U.S. Direct Tax.

2. Private Collections

Chester County Historical Society Historic American Building Survey, West Bradford folio, Humphry Marshall House; Notes and photographs, c. 1954.





- Breou's, Official Series of Farm Maps, Chester County, Pennsylvania. Philadelphia, W. H. Kirk & Co., 1883, plate 237, West Bradford, plate 237.
- Darlington, William. <u>Memorials of John Bartram and Humphry Marshall</u>, with notices of their <u>Botanical Contemporaries</u>. Philadelphia: Lindsay and Blakestone, 1849.
- Faris, John T. <u>Old Gardens In and About Philadelphia</u> Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1932.
- Futhey, J. Smith and Cope, Joseph. <u>History of Chester County, Pennsylvania</u>. Philadelphia; Louis H. Everts, 1881.
- Gutowski, Robert R. "Documenting Humphry Marshall's Boxwood," <u>The Boxwood</u> <u>Buletin</u>, v. 24, no. 4, April 1985, pp. 95-102.
- Harshberger, John W. <u>The Botanists of Philadelphia and Their Work</u>. Philadelphia: T. C. Davis Press, 1899.
- Harshberger, John W. "The old Gardens of Pennsylvania: Humphry Marshall's" <u>The Garden Magazine</u>, November, 1920, pp. 137-139.



Witmer, A. P. <u>Atlas of Chester County, Pennsylvania</u>. Safe Harbor, PA, 1873, plate 30.



Verbal Boundary

The boundary of the Humphry Marshall House property is shown as the heavy line in the accompanying map entitled Composite Map, Plan No. 50-72, surveyed by Yerkes Associates, Inc., on November 26, 1985, last revised December 10, 1986, and drawn at a scale of 100 feet to the inch.

Beginning at a point set in the title line in the Strasburg Road, L. R. 15180, at a common corner with land belonging to Robert Siter; said point being distant 3046.32 feet, more or less, measured eastwardly along the title line of the Strasburg Road from its intersection with the title line of the Marshallton Thorndale Road; thence extending from the first mentioned point and place of beginning, along the title line of the Strasburg Road the two following courses and distances to wit: (1) North 84 degrees 53 minutes 00 seconds West 56.92 feet to a point; thence (2) North 78 degrees 38 minutes 03 seconds West 0 360.00 feet to a point; thence leaving the road and extending along remaining land belonging to the Chester County Historical Society the 4 following cources and distances to wit: (1) North 05 degrees 51 seconds East 250.00 feet to a point; thence (2) North 82 degrees 25 minutes 20 seconds East 131.64 feet to a point; thence (3) North 20 degrees 53 minutes 00 seconds West 90.00 feet to a point; thence (4) 69 degrees 07 minutes 00 seconds East 115.00 feet to a point set in a line of land belonging to Robert A. Siter; thence extending along land of Robert A. Siter, South 20 degrees 53 minutes 00 seconds East 500.00 feet to the first mentioned point and place of beginning.

Containing an area of 2.559 acres of land be the same more or less.

This area comprised all lands within the Marshall tract which seem to bear historic references to the mansion and the botanic garden.







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Second floor plan, existing conditions.

Figure 3