

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

APR 29 1976

DATE ENTERED

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

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

W.H.
*** * Washington Historic District**

AND/OR COMMON

Old Washington

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

U S 62/68

Boundaries as shown on annexed map(s)

__ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Washington

__ VICINITY OF

01

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Kentucky

021

Mason

161

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Large multiple private ownership; some public ownership

STREET & NUMBER

City of Washington

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Washington

__ VICINITY OF

Kentucky

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

County Clerk's Office - Mason County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

West Third Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Maysville

Kentucky

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky

DATE

1971

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Kentucky Heritage Commission

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Frankfort

Kentucky

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 _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FAIR | <input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED | | |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The significant architecture of Washington covers the approximate period 1765-1850. With a few exceptions, architectural development ceased in the early nineteenth century at the beginning of Washington's decline. Taking into account the time lag between architectural styles fashionable on the Atlantic seaboard and in the West, the lack of refined, period examples within the town that can be found elsewhere in the state becomes understandable. Although there are few unique or outstanding examples of particular architectural styles, the structures extant represent the life of 18th- and 19th-century Washington and they give evidence of, and lend support to, the historical heritage that is Washington.

Eighteen buildings were earmarked within the boundaries of the original historic district (approved January 21, 1970). They included the most important buildings historically and architecturally, for example:

- The Paxton Inn (c. 1810), a brick three-story plain Federal style structure, is a restored example of an early Kentucky public inn (HABS).
- The Paxton-Evans House (c. 1800), a two-story brick house, is the central element in a three-unit row of simple Federal-style buildings (HABS).
- Albert Sidney Johnston House, representative of simple early frame domestic building in Kentucky, is reputed to be the birthplace and childhood home of one of the most important generals of the Confederate States of America Army, Albert Sidney Johnston (HABS).
- Federal Hill (1800) (HABS 193), is a large two-story brick house with transitional details of Georgian and Federal styles built by Colonel Thomas Marshall and completed by his son. Another son, John, became the Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court (1801-1835).
- Marshall Key House (1807), a two-story brick house (also HABS), which, like Federal Hill, contains Georgian and Federal elements. The house has a Federal style main body with a Georgian style doorway. The interior exhibits a beautiful self-supporting "curving stairway" in the side entrance hallway. The builder was Colonel Marshall Key, who had come to Kentucky in 1795.
- Arthur Fox House (also Fox-Bickley House, c. 1785), a two-story frame and nogging clapboarded structure, was built by one of the original trustees of Washington.

The district boundaries as originally drawn, however, excluded areas that have historically been included within the city limits of Washington. Excluded were numerous historic sites which date from the same period as the central part of town (see map, Washington Kentucky Preservation Development, p. 61). The proposed boundaries would, in large part, conform to the original boundaries as laid out by Arthur Fox and William Wood in 1786 (see map 2). Specifically, the northern boundary is to extend to U.S. 68, east to St. Patrick's

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION | <input type="checkbox"/> LAW | <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599 | <input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY | <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> ART | <input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC | <input type="checkbox"/> THEATER |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE | <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1900- | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY | <input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION | | |

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The town of Washington, located in Mason County in northeastern Kentucky, was founded in 1785, making it one of the oldest towns in Kentucky. Now a quiet village bypassed by the main thoroughfare from Lexington to Maysville, Washington was once the second largest town in Kentucky as reported by the first federal census of 1790. Washington became the county seat in 1788 when Mason County was formed and so remained until 1847 when it was moved to the more important rivertown of Maysville (then known as Limestone). Located near the Ohio River and the landing site for settlers migrating west into the Kentucky interior, Washington became a resting spot for travelers and a distribution center for mail for a greater part of the western territory. The town was also the birthplace of Albert Sidney Johnston, one of the most famous of Civil War Confederate generals.¹

In addition to its historical significance, is the community's architectural value. An assemblage of buildings remain, representing certain stages of the development of Kentucky architecture from the early straightforward and honest log structures of the frontier to the sophisticated brick Georgian and Federal and the intriguing Carpenter's Gothic styles of the mid-19th century. The rich variety of buildings include a "flat-boat house"--the only surviving example of this unique kind of structure--a bank, an inn, row buildings, churches, a school building, a fine group of homes in log, frame, brick, and stone construction, and dependency buildings of several types. Other physical elements of importance are the original walks of stone, the wells, and the first macadamized road west of the Alleghenies.

The beginning of the first permanent settlement in what is now Mason County occurred in May 1775, when a group of ten men arrived from Virginia to survey and improve lands. One of the men, Jonathan Higgs, located his cabin near the present east end of York Street in Washington. The most influential of the group was Simon Kenton, who cleared about an acre of land on Lawrence Creek near a large spring about 1 1/2 miles from the present site of Washington. Although other emigrants continued to arrive over the next few years, the threat of Indian attack hung over the small stations until after 1782. Although the Battle of Blue Licks fought nearby on August 19, 1782, ended with an

¹The historical background presented in #8, page 1 through 3, is condensed from documented material found in Washington, Kentucky Preservation Development.

(continued)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Best, Edna H. "The Historic Past of Washington, Mason County, Kentucky," Pamphlet, 1944.
 Clift, G. Glenn. History of Maysville and Mason County. Lexington: Transylvania Printing Co., 1936.
 Coleman, J. Winston, Jr. Historic Kentucky. Lexington: Henry Clay Press, 1968.

(continued)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 180, including original district

UTM REFERENCES D. Longitude: $83^{\circ} 48' 40''$ Lat: $38^{\circ} 37' 20''$ B. Longitude: $83^{\circ} 48' 18''$ Latitude: $38^{\circ} 37' 18''$
 C. Longitude: $83^{\circ} 48' 45''$ Latitude: $38^{\circ} 36' 42''$ B. Longitude: $83^{\circ} 48' 18''$ Latitude: $38^{\circ} 36' 41''$

| | | | | | | | |
|---|------|---------|----------|---|------|---------|----------|
| A | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING | B | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING |
| C | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING | D | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|-------|------|--------|------|
| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE
 Louis N. Browning, President GM/FW

ORGANIZATION
 Old Washington, Inc. DATE
 November 1974

STREET & NUMBER
 R. R. 2, Box 23 TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN
 Maysville STATE
 Kentucky

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 Cleod W. Melton DATE
4/27/76

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 5/28/76

ATTEST: William M. ... DATE
5/26/76

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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Cemetery, southward, parallel to Main Street, to U.S. 62. The boundary is to extend as far westward as the western boundary of the Old Baptist cemetery and northward paralleling Main Street (see map 1).

As evidenced by the enclosed 1794 plat and 1876 map, the northern boundary was marked by Clarks Run Pike, now U.S. 68, and the southern boundary by a road now the present U.S. 62. The east-west boundary is somewhat more vague. The 1794 plat shows that the lots to the west of Water Street and to the east of Green (Marshall) Streets were much larger than the four tiers of lots between Water and Main, and Main and Green Streets. Although streets were not built east of Green or west of Water, houses were located in the earliest period of settlement on these outer lots, archaeological and historical research has uncovered. Among the late 19th-century and more modern houses in the area to be added are the following structures:

(Numbers as identified on enclosed map 4, from the Washington Preservation Development; "1876" refers to structure shown on the 1876 Atlas.)

- N307 An early 1800s, one-story frame, frontier saltbox structure.
- N309 Site of 1876 structure where archaeological investigation is recommended.
- N310 "
- N312 "
- N316 "
- N402 "
- N403 "
- N404 "
- S402 "
- S403 A mid-19th century two-story frame Gothic Revival house. At the rear is a Gothic Revival outbuilding intact.
- S405 A c. 1800 two-story frame house of hewn, mortised and tenoned, pegged timber construction.
- S411 Site of 1876 structure where archaeological investigation is recommended.
- S412 Site of old cemetery.
- S414 A c. 1800 one-and-a-half-story frame house once used as Presbyterian parsonage.

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American defeat, it became the last important battle against the Indians on Kentucky soil. Thereafter settlement rapidly increased.

A major route into Kentucky was by way of the Ohio River, the landing at Limestone (renamed Maysville in 1793) on the Ohio, and taking Smith's Wagon Road into the Bluegrass. It was this proximity to the Ohio and the flow of immigration traffic that saw the rise and eventual rivalry of Washington and Maysville.

In 1785, an important land transaction occurred between Simon Kenton, who had one year previous established a station near the future site of Washington, and two Virginians, Arthur Fox and William Wood. Kenton sold 700 acres to the men, who decided to lay out a one-mile-square grid-iron site, sell lots, and turn a profit. Expectations were high--the town was named Washington with the intention that it would possibly become the national capital; it was the first town in America to be so named. The ample plan with "in" and "out" lots would have been more than sufficient to accommodate the Federal Government of the time and the idea of placing the center of administration toward the West appealed to many. Fortunately, since the capital was eventually located elsewhere, the site proved to be a successful one without this incentive. Those settlers who landed at Limestone and who wished to travel to the Kentucky interior had to negotiate a steep hill to the plateau three and one-half miles away where Washington stands. It required a full day to drive a heavily loaded wagon that short distance and so most elected to stop overnight at the town before continuing their inland journey. Failing that, almost every traveller stopped at least for refreshment or directions. And so this commercial basis guaranteed a certain amount of prosperity in the early years of the town.

A list of taxed property was prepared in 1790 in order to raise the maintenance funds needed for the town. According to a contemporary description, Washington was "a village of log cabins" but the first U.S. Census lists four hundred sixty-two residents living in one hundred nineteen houses.

Since the establishment of Washington, there had been constant land transactions. Fox and Wood continued to sell lots and gradually, with the construction of public as well as private buildings, the general fabric of the town began to take on character.

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Confusion about lot lines, however, caused the Kentucky General Assembly to pass an act on December 19, 1793, which determined the widths of Main, William, York, Water, and Green Streets. It also required that no new buildings could be erected without application to the Board of Trustees and that a survey of the town be undertaken, which was completed October 10, 1794.

The most important building in the town, the Mason County Courthouse, was built in 1794 and signaled a most productive period in Washington's history. The town had already become one of the most dominant in the state. Now the post office became the mail distribution center for the entire Northwest Territory including the present states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin. Not only had the mail service increased, but the influx of lawyers and others concerned with court activities resulted in the establishment of a number of taverns and inns providing accommodations and amenities.

This political, religious, and educational center of the county was well described in a letter written by Edward Harris of Washington to a friend in New Hampshire dated April 11, 1797: (Washington, Kentucky Preservation Development, p.18, Appendix D)

I live in the County town: which is about a square mile laid out in three main streets north & south, between the two streets are house lots of half an acre each, measuring each way from the center street: the rest of the land is laid out in five acre lots on each side of the back streets; there are three streets running east & west at such distance with a number of alleys as to make it convenient to come at the lots, we have a court house built with stone, a Gaolors [jailor's] house of brick & 1/2 feet long placed so as the ends to make the inside & out of the room, a thick stone wall 15 feet high surrounds the Gaol, There is a considerable number of large Stone & Brick houses in the main street, there is but one meeting house & that is a Baptist, the Presbyterians are but few in number & meet in the court house: there has of late been a great stir among the baptists & and a great many persons dipped; I esteem their doctrines very corrupt. We are a mixture of many sorts of people & religions which makes Church & State difficult to manage. . . .
(Edward Harris)

Another account by a Philadelphia merchant named Espy estimated that Washington was "a thriving community with one hundred fifty houses only ten or twelve of which were masonry " (Washington, Kentucky Preservation Development, p. 19).

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After the turn of the century, particularly following the War of 1812, Washington experienced a slow decline. One traveler passing through on November 25, 1818, described the town as being "laid out on a large plan but not thriving. . . ." Disaster struck in April of 1825 when a fire destroyed thirteen buildings including two taverns. Another misfortune occurred in 1820 when the Lexington and Ohio Railroad was laid out from Lexington to the Ohio River bypassing Washington, a serious blow to the future economy of the town. Added catastrophe came with the outbreak of Asiatic cholera in 1832 and '33 and resulted in a marked decrease in population. The nearby town of Maysville, however, experienced rapid development between 1830 and 1850, surpassing the growth of Washington.

During the 1840s Maysville's importance was steadily becoming more and more evident. What had been a mere boat landing for pioneers traveling inland had become a progressive seat of commerce and center of transportation. It no longer required a full day to travel to Washington and the pioneer frontier that once was Kentucky did not hold the interests of adventurers and new settlers. They were able to travel much farther west. The inevitable happened and in 1847 the decision was made to transfer the county seat from Washington to Maysville (see the nomination form for the Maysville Courthouse Square and 'Mechanics' Row' Historic District, listed on the National Register May 12, 1975).

From the turn of the century to the present time, Washington has experienced very few physical alterations. When the highway by-passed the town, Washington was virtually preserved. The major changes occurred in 1909 when the former courthouse, then converted into a school, was struck by lightning and burned. The loss of the building was a serious one. As the focal point of the town it had given continuity not only architecturally but historically.

Also included in the district is the old Baptist cemetery which, from the earliest days, appears to have been part of the town and where one of the founders of the town, Arthur Fox, is buried. The cemetery, established on land formerly owned by Simon Kenton, is described by Kentucky historian Richard Collins in a narrative about the Washington Baptist Church:

In 1871, was torn down, and a new one erected on its site, the old Baptist church in Washington, the first house of worship built in northern Kentucky and one of the very first in the state. The church was constituted, and the building

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erected in 1785, upon ground given by Rev. William Wood, their first preacher; who also gave the ground around it for a grave-yard, setting apart the northeast corner for strangers.... In the grave-yard, the oldest stone with an inscription is of undressed limestone; the lettering, rudely carved with a chisel and now almost illegible, is 'Heare lies the body of John Coalter, eaged 50 years, deceased July 7th, 1789.' An Indian chief, and several of his wives and warriors, are buried in this ground. (Collins, p. 559)

Among the Revolutionary War veterans listed in the DAR records as being buried in the cemetery are Arthur Fox (with William Wood, co-founder of Washington), George Wood, and Joseph Cox.

At the northeast end of town is St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Cemetery.

Archaeological Report

An historic archaeological survey was completed during the summer of 1975 in order that preservation development plans would cover all aspects of the township. This survey shed new light on an integral component which had not been previously addressed. The physical survey and historical research of others led to the discovery of numerous historic archaeological sites both inside and outside of the original historic district boundary. In addition to this, close attention was paid to the historic archaeological components of extant buildings.

In a township such as Washington, it is difficult to discuss individual archaeological sites or areas, for they should be viewed as a continuous, almost interwoven, facet of the district. Nevertheless, specific sites which need to be brought to light are the Courthouse, Johnston Kitchen, Osborne Garden with nearby stable and alley, a jail, Post Office, and numerous sites of previous dependencies.

The surface collection of artifacts within the township provided a good chronological overview of the areas cultural remains and their development. A total of 1,858 artifacts were recovered from the surface, and represent occupational periods from c. 1785 through more recent times. Pearlware, numerous varieties of ironstone, various heavy stonewares including American blue on grey, were collected throughout the township.

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Recovered glass artifacts included basal fragments of bottles bearing the pre-circa 1860 pontil scars, dark olive or "black" glass, numerous canning jar fragments, and a considerable amount of the sun-colored amethyst glass characteristic of the 1880-1914 periods. Metallic artifacts were scarce but did include hand-wrought pieces, small iron chains, a boot scraper, and items of 19th century building hardware. These recovered materials will hopefully be developed into an interpretive display as preservation plans progress.

Within the confines of the state, Washington possesses an extremely valuable historical archaeological complex.

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Collins, Lewis. Historical Sketches of Kentucky. Maysville: By the author, 1847.

County Court and Deed Book Records, Mason County Courthouse.

Lee, Lucy C. A Historical Sketch of Mason County. Louisville: Masonic Home Journal, (no date).

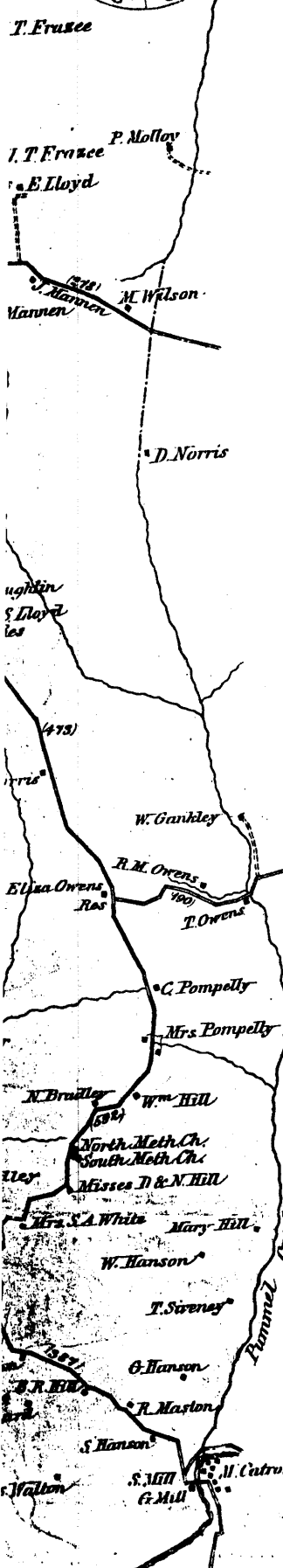
Personal records of Humphreys Taylor.

Walden, John D.; Dr. Phillip Noffsinger; Frederick T. Wilson; and others. Washington, Kentucky Preservation Development. Washington, Ky: Old Washington, Inc., and Washington, Kentucky Historic Township Commission, 1975.



WASHINGTON

Washington Precinct
Scale 30 Rods to an Inch



| CLARK'S RUN | PIKE | CATHOLIC CEMETERY |
|-------------|---|-------------------|
| 47 46 | P. Brennan McCarthy McCaughlin T. Mackey | 22 |
| 48 45 | T. Mackey | 27 |
| 49 44 | Col. J. Goggin H. Hunter H. Warner | 20 |
| 50 43 | Mrs. Blanchard H. Warner | 18 |
| 51 42 | Cap. Bickel M. Collins | 16 |
| 52 41 | Col. J. Goggin L. Goggin C. Collins | 17 |
| WILLIAMS | WILLIAMS | WILLIAMS |
| 53 40 | Mrs. Goggin | 76 |
| 54 39 | Mrs. Goggin | 75 |
| 55 38 | Bap. Ch. R. Hunter | 74 |
| 56 37 | W. Gankley R.M. Owens T. Owens | 73 |
| 57 36 | M. Kearney J. Smith Miss Reubin | 34 |
| YORK | YORK | YORK |
| 78 73 | J. Linn J. Linn | 67 |
| 79 74 | CEM T. Mackey | 68 |
| 80 75 | T. Mackey | 69 |
| 81 76 | T. Mackey | 70 |
| 82 77 | T. Mackey | 71 |
| | T. Mackey | 72 |

WASHINGTON BUSINESS REFERENCES.

- James Rogers, Blacksmith and Horsehoer, on Clark's Run, Turnpike.
- N. Goellenstein, Blacksmith. Repairing done at reasonable rates.
- H. D. Knight, Blacksmith. Special attention given to Horsehoing. Work warranted.
- George Taylor, Dealer in Groceries, Hats, Caps, Boots and Shoes. All of which he will sell cheap for cash. Cash paid for all kinds of country produce.
- D. B. Owens, Farmer and Stock Raiser, Dealer in fine blooded cattle, fine hogs; and manufacturer of pure Crab Cider.
- John R. Masterson, Wholesale Tobacco Dealer.
- C. B. Collins, Carpenter, Contractor and Builder.