

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

LANCASTER COUNTY COURTHOUSE

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

43 East King Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Lancaster

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

16th

STATE

Pennsylvania

CODE

42

COUNTY

Lancaster

CODE

071

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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" 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

County of Lancaster

STREET & NUMBER

50 North Duke Street

CITY, TOWN

Lancaster

VICINITY OF

STATE

Pennsylvania 17602

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Lancaster County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

50 North Duke Street

CITY, TOWN

Lancaster

STATE

Pennsylvania

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Lancaster's Heritage

DATE

1972

 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Lancaster County Planning Commission

CITY, TOWN

Lancaster

STATE

Pennsylvania

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input 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

Two elevations are most important: Duke and King Streets

Duke Street (east) elevation

Elevation from street height, consists of a high foundation level executed partly in ashlar cut stone with beveled edges and partly in stucco or mastic to simulate the effect of stone. It gives the appearance of a high basement and full first story contained within the level of the cut stone and simulated cut stone. Above this level is the tall, high expanse of the building simulating one full story, which inside is really divided into two stories, with nine over nine windows.

This elevation is further articulated by pedimented pavilion areas. The central one is on the original section of the building which is 164 feet in length and 72 feet wide. This pavilion area has six Cocalico sandstone Corinthian order columns. The capitals of these columns are done in terracotta.

The second pedimented pavilion is on the northern cross arm or Tee constructed 1896-98 from the design of James H. Warner. It has four Corinthian order columns. The Cornice is executed in wood with dentil and leaf-carved scrolled modillions.

The very tall second story windows are separated by Corinthian order pilasters. The window pediments are supported on console brackets. The space between the top of the tall window facade and pediment crown bears ornamental parallels with very early Rococo.

Between the bases of the piers that support the columns of the center pediments on the Duke Street elevation are inset areas of iron fencing that may have been reused in the 1920's from the 1850-55 period. The center doorway on Duke Street lines up with the center of the pediment section on the early section of the building.

The C. Emlen Urban revisions of 1921-26 seem to copy in the brackets of the doors added in 1926, the detailing on the pediments which crown the windows of the original building.

King Street (south) elevation

Two low one-story additions were designed by C. Emlen Urban in 1926 of cut stone with bevelled edges matching the effect of cut stone seen in the high foundation level of the rest of building. Each has a three bay elevation of arched windows. They have cornices on the front with significant vasiform stone baluster poles that are unusual in material and detailing. The additions are sympathetic to the original structure

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LANCASTER COUNTY COURTHOUSE

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and were a very expensive project.

A broad flight of steps leads up to triple arched doorways, each doorway having a keystone and a leaf-carved Greek key motif. Fan lights in wood exist over each doorway; above this rises the major pedimented front of the building. Again it is of Corinthian order with sandstone columns. There are six columns and a total of six Corinthian pilasters. Setting back from the plane of the pedimented pavilion of the facade are three tall windows matching the tall windows of Duke Street. Each has 12 over 12 windows. The pedimented cornice matches that on the Duke Street facade of the original section.

It should be noted that the mastic stucco covering above the stone and simulated stone foundation level is a light buff. There was probably more of a color contrast originally. In line with mid-19th century tastes, the building uses subtle combinations of muted buffs or off-whites. The Columns had a pinker or red color originally and might have been colored.

A copper-clad dome with four clock faces, resting on twelve columns, and topped by a statue of Justice, is at the center of the roof. The bell that continues to mark the hours and toll the beginning of court sessions and hearings was cast by Joseph Bernard and Co. of Philadelphia, and weighs 1,034 pounds. The statue of Justice is not the original but rather a replacement from the 1920's.

The building is Roman, not Greek revival. Samuel Sloan was a major architect of the 19th century when Roman revival was felt to be appropriate for governmental facilities; relating the Roman republic to the American republic. The front lamps on the building have a Roman look.

Art Alley (west) elevation

The west facade is not a mirror of the east facade. It was done more simply and at less expense since at the time it abutted a complementary three story townhouse. The facade has pilasters rather than columns and matches the rest of the building.

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Grant Street (north) elevation

This elevation contained eight pilasters and seven high windows sympathetic to the major facades. It has been substantially covered by a connection from the new Courthouse Annex to the north. A first floor level doorway remains.

Interior

Most important aspects are the vestibule, an entry-way with two grand stairways leading up to Courtroom Number 1. The load bearing columns in this area are of Egyptian revival. Their material remains to be determined although it appears to be cast iron. Courtroom Number 1 is located on the second floor and occupies the entire front of the building. Most interior design dates from the 1926 work of Emlen Urban. The building's first floor transverse hall has a north-south orientation, is barrel vaulted, and has mid-nineteenth century wall paintings frequently but faithfully retouched in the 20th century. The building has marble floors throughout, with marble wainscoating and door enframements.

Additional details regarding the building can be found in the article by Fay Follet Kramer entitled "Lancaster County's Present Courthouse: History of its Construction 1852-1855" found in Volume 71, Number 1, 1967 of the Journal of the Lancaster County Historical Society, attached as a part of this nomination.

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 checked="" 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/HUMANITARIAN	
<input 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 type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Sloan/Warner/Urban, Builders

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Lancaster County Courthouse is an important example of Roman Revival style architecture. It was built between 1852 and 1855 from designs drawn by the nationally noted Philadelphia architect, Samuel Sloan; his plan was influenced by William Strickland's Tennessee State Capitol. Between 1896 and 1898, the north wing was added; designed by the Lancaster architect, James H. Warner, who also designed Lancaster's Central Market, it matches the materials and details of the original section by Sloan. In 1927, low wings flanking the exterior staircase were built from designs by C. Emlen Urban, the leading architect in Lancaster County Courthouse represents a sensitive blending of the designs of three noted architects.

The building has played, since 1852, the leading role in Lancaster County law, politics, and government. Three prominent legal personages practiced law here. Thaddeus Stevens, of national fame, maintained a practice here until his death in 1869. J. Hay Brown, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania from 1915-21 and a Justice on that Court from 1899, practiced law in Lancaster from 1871-99. He served as City solicitor from 1874-76 and County solicitor from 1876-79. William Heustis Keller, President Judge of the Superior Court of Pennsylvania from 1935-45 and a Judge of that Court from 1919, practiced law in Lancaster from 1893-1919.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Kramer, Fay Follet. "Lancaster County's Present Courthouse: History of its Construction. 1852-1855," Journal of the Lancaster County Historical Society, LXXI (1967). pp. 1-62.

Loose, John Ward Willson. "Courthouse History," Lancaster County Courthouse Dedication brochure. Lancaster: County of Lancaster, 1977 pp 3

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .57
 QUADRANGLE NAME Lancaster QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A	18	318,717,4,0	443,216,3,0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

(See Attachment)

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Robert M. Behling, Associate Community Planner

ORGANIZATION

Lancaster County Planning Commission

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 3480

TELEPHONE

717-299-8333

CITY OR TOWN

Lancaster

STATE

Pennsylvania 17604

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

Ed Weintraub

TITLE ED WEINTRAUB, Director
Office of Historic Preservation

DATE 8-18-78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

