

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(NATIONAL HISTORIC

LANDMARKS) (Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:

Pennsylvania

COUNTY:

Philadelphia

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:

Carpenters' Hall

AND/OR HISTORIC:

Carpenters' Hall

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

320 Chestnut Street

CITY OR TOWN:

Philadelphia

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:

3rd

STATE

Pennsylvania

CODE

42

COUNTY:

Philadelphia

CODE

101

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY
(Check One)

- ☐ District ☒ Building
☐ Site ☐ Structure
☐ Object

OWNERSHIP

- ☐ Public
☒ Private
☐ Both

- Public Acquisition:
☐ In Process
☐ Being Considered

STATUS

- ☒ Occupied
☐ Unoccupied
☐ Preservation work
in progress

ACCESSIBLE
TO THE PUBLIC

- Yes:
☐ Restricted
☒ Unrestricted
☐ No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- ☐ Agricultural ☐ Government ☐ Park ☐ Transportation ☐ Comments
☐ Commercial ☐ Industrial ☐ Private Residence ☐ Other (Specify) _____
☐ Educational ☐ Military ☐ Religious _____
☐ Entertainment ☒ Museum ☐ Scientific _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:

The Carpenters' Company of the City and County of
Philadelphia

STREET AND NUMBER:

320 Chestnut Street

CITY OR TOWN:

Philadelphia

STATE:

Pennsylvania

CODE

42

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:

Philadelphia City Hall

STREET AND NUMBER:

Broad and Market Streets

CITY OR TOWN:

Philadelphia

STATE

Pennsylvania

CODE

42

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

Historic American Buildings Survey (2 photos, 1936)

DATE OF SURVEY: 1936 ☒ Federal ☐ State ☐ County ☐ Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

Library of Congress/Annex

STREET AND NUMBER:

Division of Prints and Photographs

CITY OR TOWN:

Washington

STATE:

D.C.

CODE

11

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Pennsylvania

COUNTY: Philadelphia

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	☐ Excellent	☒ Good	☐ Fair	☐ Deteriorated	☐ Ruins	☐ Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	☒ Altered	☐ Unaltered	☐ Moved	☒ Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Erected in 1770-73, Carpenters' Hall is one of the finest examples of late Georgian public building architecture in the United States. Designed and constructed by Robert Smith, the hall is a two-story brick building with central pedimented pavilions projecting north and south which gives the structure a Greek cross plan. The brick walls are laid in Flemish bond with dark glazed headers. The gable roof is crowned by a central octagonal cupola with chimneys located at the east and west gable ends. Large windows are framed by classical surrounds with white shutters accenting the lower level. The north entrance has broad high steps leading to a pedimented double doorway with a fanlight above. This decorative wooden door with engaged Doric columns was installed in 1791 to finally complete the building. Above this, three roundheaded windows set above false balustrades, rest on a white beltcourse and small molded cornice. The pediment itself is ornamented by a Greek fret band which also runs along the entire cornice of the building.

Inside, the first floor is occupied by a large meeting room which occupies the entire area with the exception of a small entrance hall. A lightly molded cornice with Greek fret band surrounds the main center hall. On the south, two fluted Ionic columns form a screen between the center room and small hall of the pavilion. These are repeated in the north but are engaged in the wall which divides the entrance and stair hall from the main room. Mantels on the east and west walls have broken pediments over an eared overmantel decorated with delicate moldings.

This area is occupied today by a small museum and souvenir stand which detracts somewhat from the interior as does the modern tile floor. The upper floor houses a library installed in 1854 when the building underwent its first restoration, and rooms for the custodian.

BOUNDARY

The exterior boundary of Carpenters' Hall is marked by a white fence which separates the property from the Independence National Historic Park, beginning at a point on the south side of Chestnut Street 60' west of Orianna Street; thence 140' in a southerly direction; thence 25.5' eastward, thence 115' south, thence 66' west, thence 115' north, thence 26' east, thence 140' north; thence 14' to the point of beginning as described in the agreement with the Secretary of the Interior pursuant to the act of Congress approved June 28, 1948 (62 Stat. 1061), entitled "An Act to provide for the establishment of the Independence National Historical Park."

S E E I N S T R U C T I O N S

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

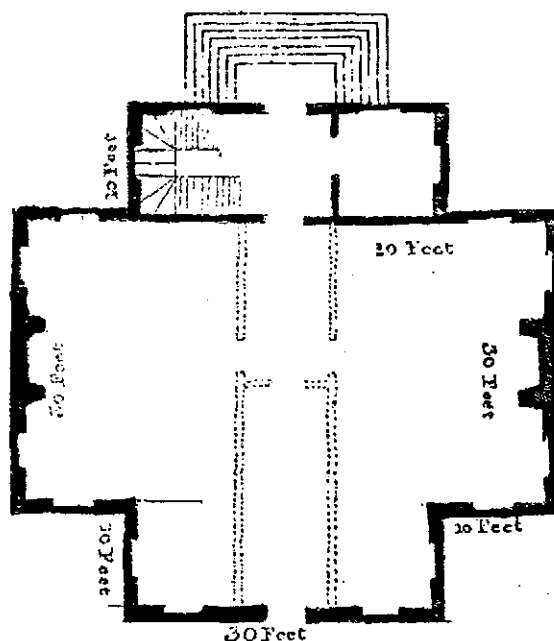
(NATIONAL HISTORIC
LANDMARKS)

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Pennsylvania	
COUNTY Philadelphia	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

7. Description



First floor plan of Carpenter's Hall showing central hallway partitions removed soon after construction, from Historic Philadelphia, p.96.



B. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- ☐ Pre-Columbian ☐ 16th Century ☒ 18th Century ☐ 20th Century
☐ 15th Century ☐ 17th Century ☐ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1770

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| ☐ Aboriginal | ☐ Education | ☐ Political | ☐ Urban Planning |
| ☐ Prehistoric | ☐ Engineering | ☐ Religion/Philosophy | ☐ Other (Specify) _____ |
| ☐ Historic | ☐ Industry | ☐ Science | _____ |
| ☐ Agriculture | ☐ Invention | ☐ Sculpture | _____ |
| ☒ Architecture | ☐ Landscape Architecture | ☐ Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| ☐ Art | ☐ Literature | ☐ Theater | _____ |
| ☐ Commerce | ☐ Military | ☐ Transportation | _____ |
| ☐ Communications | ☐ Music | | |
| ☐ Conservation | | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Carpenters' Hall, erected in 1770-71 by the Carpenters' Company of Philadelphia is one of the finest examples of late Georgian public architecture in the United States. In the form of a Greek cross with four projecting gable ends and gracefully proportioned octagonal cupola, Carpenters' Hall exterior exemplifies the reserved but sophisticated design which made Philadelphia the handsome center of the American Colonies and early Republic. The building itself served as a meeting place for the First Continental Congress in 1774, as a hospital for both British and American troops and as the temporary office for both the First and Second Banks of the United States. Privately owned within the Independence National Park, Carpenters' Hall contributes to the total complex by preserving in part the original architectural cohesiveness of the area, providing a rare survival of a unit of Colonial public buildings.

HISTORY

The Carpenters' Company of Philadelphia, probably the oldest builder's organization in the United States, was founded in 1724. Fashioned after trade guilds of England, the most famous of which is "Worshipful Company of Carpenters' of London", its members tended from the outset to be master carpenters rather than journeymen, who shared the duties of the architect and contractor of today. As a result, the members of the Carpenters' Company were responsible for much of the design and construction of the city. Edmund Woolley, builder of the State House, John Harrison, responsible for much of Christ Church, and Robert Smith, builder of St. Peter's Episcopal Church and the Carpenters' Hall itself are only a few of the many craftsman who wielded much control in the building industry and helped to shape the city.

The oldest existing records show that as early as 1763 the Company was contemplating building a meeting hall. In 1768 a lot was acquired and by 1770 they were ready to build. Shortly after they bought the land, the Company voted to sell a third of the Chestnut Street frontage. From this and subsequent developments it appears that the Hall was always planned to head up a narrow court, flanked by buildings to be leased for rent. The placement of buildings in the middle of a city block was not uncommon in Philadelphia where the full exploitation of lots was possible only by development of the interior areas.

(continued)

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Carpenters' Hall File, Philadelphia Historical Commission, City Hall Annex, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
 Cousins, Frank, and Riley, Philip, M., The Colonial Architecture of Philadelphia, Boston, 1920, pp. 8, 148, 210-12.
 Morrison, Hugh, Early American Architecture, New York, 1952, pp. 517.
 Peterson, Charles, "Carpenters' Hall," Historic Philadelphia, Philadelphia, 1953, pp. 96-128.
 Tatum, George B., Penn's Great Town, Philadelphia, 1961, pp. 20, 30, 36-37, 42, 46, 157.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		UTM 48.487360.4421770	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: .75 acres

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: Patricia Heintzelman, architectural historian, Landmarks Review Project; original form done by Charles Snell, 1967

ORGANIZATION: Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service DATE: 8/30/74

STREET AND NUMBER: 1100 L Street

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: D.C. CODE: 11

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

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 ☐

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

Name _____

Title _____

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

Date _____

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS) Landmark

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS) Boundary Certified:

Date _____

ATTEST:

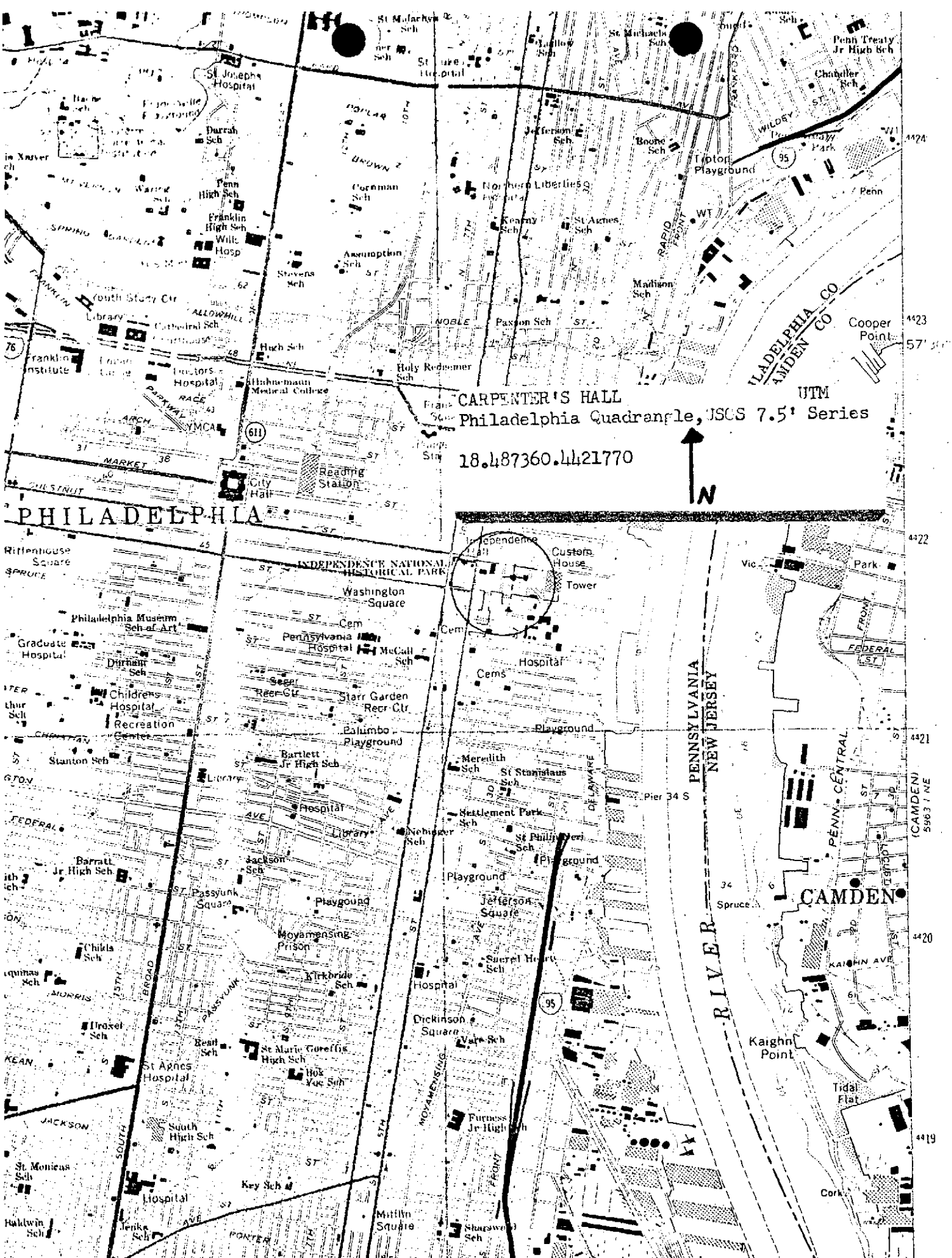
Chief, Hist. & Arch. Surveys

Boundary Administered: Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

Director, O.I.P.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



UTM
Philadelphia Quadrangle, USCS 7.5' Series
18.487360.4421770

