

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FINAL

| |
|------------------|
| FOR NPS USE ONLY |
| RECEIVED |
| 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 Carpenter, Willard House

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 405 Carpenter Street

___ NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT Eighth

CITY, TOWN Evansville

STATE Indiana VICINITY OF CODE COUNTY CODE
018 Vanderburgh 163

3 CLASSIFICATION

| CATEGORY | OWNERSHIP | STATUS | PRESENT USE |
|---|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT | <input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE | <input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK |
| <input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> BOTH | <input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SITE | PUBLIC ACQUISITION | 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 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 Medco Centers, Inc.

STREET & NUMBER 405 Carpenter Street

CITY, TOWN Evansville VICINITY OF STATE Indiana 47703

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Vanderburgh County Recorder

STREET & NUMBER City-County Building

CITY, TOWN Evansville STATE Indiana 47703

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Historic American Buildings Survey (Indiana-24-11)

DATE 1934 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Division of Prints and Photographs Library of Congress

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

The Willard Carpenter Mansion (1848-1849) is one of the few Greek Revival structures extant in Evansville. Situated on a small portion of a once extensive property, the austere symmetry and massing of this three story, five bay block is reminiscent of Federal architecture. The brick walls, which rest on brick and limestone footings, are covered with stucco scored to simulate dressed stone. It is not known whether or not this treatment was contemporary to the construction of the building; however, it had evidently been applied by 1889, when an illustration of the Carpenter Mansion was published in The History of Vanderburgh County, Indiana. The gently-pitched hipped roof has recently been covered in asphalt shingles by the present owner, Medco Centers, Inc. It is probable that the original roofing material was either tin or terne; in 1934 a HABS survey team noted that the roof was "tin" or "sheet metal" (HABS Field Notebook Indiana 24-11). The roof deck does not appear to have had a balustrade but rather to have been finished as a "blind" monitor with a molded cornice.

The primary entrance is centered in the main (south) facade behind a small porch in which a simple entablature with projecting cornice is supported by pairs of pillars and pilasters. Twentieth century storm doors obscure the original recessed entry with panelled reveals. The door itself is flanked by a pair of pilasters which are in turn flanked by sidelights and a second pair of pilasters. Two additional entrances have been added to the main block, one each in the fifth or last bay of the east and west elevations, in the place of existing windows.

The fenestration is regular; the first two stories exhibit windows which differ only in scale. The typical window unit comprises six over six sash, framed by a simple limestone sill and a lintel capped by a projecting molding. The exceptions to this pattern are the window over the entrance porch which is wider and has inset fixed shutters and a shaped lintel, and several "blind" windows with fixed shutters. These "blind" windows are located on the first story in the first and fourth bays of the west elevation and the first bay of the east elevation. The first bay of the second floor of both elevations is also "blind". Rectangular attic windows repeat the rhythm of the first two stories in the frieze, which is defined by projecting stone string courses. The entablature is completed by a dentil course and projecting cornice (which conceals the gutter).

The two story addition on the rear (north) elevation was constructed by the current owner on the site of the original two story galleried ell (demolished by the American Legion). In the original ell were located the dining room, winter kitchen, and a small bedroom on the second floor. Several outbuildings such as a laundry and summer kitchen were located in the extensive grounds; however, these have not survived.

The interior of the Willard Carpenter Mansion has been altered extensively by Mr. Carpenter's heirs and by the subsequent owners, the American Legion, Channel 7, and Medco Centers, Inc. who have undertaken an extensive rehabilitation program. However, the basic plan, most of the woodwork and ornamental plaster, and several handsome fireplace mantels have survived a succession of adaptive uses. The plan of the main block features a transverse hall, dividing on the first floor a drawing room which extends the length of the building (west hall) and a parlor and library (east wall). At the rear of the structure this hall intersects a small stair hall which contains a staircase in the northeast corner. Although the drawing room has been divided into two spaces, the matching marble fireplace mantels have been retained. The parlor fire-

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

DESCRIPTION

A heavy, molded baseboard runs throughout the first and second floors, balanced by a proportionate plaster cornice. The first floor doorways are framed by pilasters carrying a flat simple entablature with projecting molded cornice. The second floor doorways are framed by a less formal molded board surrounded with crossettes. Whenever new doors have been added, every effort has been made to reproduce the original scheme.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Historic American Buildings Survey: Field Notebook and Drawings, Willard
Carpenter House (Indiana 24-11).

History of Vanderburgh County, Indiana. Brant and Fuller (1889), pp. 313-321.

Trustees of Willard Library. Statement of Trustees, June 1915.

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 type="checkbox"/> RELIGION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499 | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION | <input 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 checked="" 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 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 Constructed 1849-1850

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Historically, the Carpenter House is a monument to a man who, through personal industry and integrity, amassed a fortune through the free enterprise system and then turned that fortune to countless humanitarian purposes. Willard Carpenter was a public servant as a county commissioner, a member of the first Evansville City Council, and as an active state legislator. He was the prime mover in establishing the Evansville and Terre Haute Railroad (later the C & EI) and in bringing the terminus of the Wabash and Erie Canal to Evansville.

In becoming one of the important men in Indiana, Mr. Carpenter combined thrift, energy, and sagacity to overcome constant adversity. He was born in 1803, one of 12 children, and grew up on a farm that the family carved out of the Vermont wilderness. He left there in his late teens, and alone as a woodcutter, tanner, school-teacher, peddler, digger on the Wabash and Erie Canal and in partnership with several of his brothers in the drygoods and notions business, he slowly increased his assets and made his way to Evansville, where he joined another brother in business in 1837. His fortune grew quickly in the merchandising and real estate business, and 1848 he began building the home that would become a landmark in Evansville. Although he suffered a number of major financial setbacks, he always was able to recover. He contributed to the community Willard Library (listed on the National Register) and an endowment to support it; land for an elementary school; a home for wayward girls; a county poor house; support for various churches; and money for many other benefactions, such as aid to seminary students and to missionaries. Coming to light after his death in 1883 was his role at the risk of his safety and freedom as an agent for the Underground Railway. Thus had his house served not only as the homestead of an aggressive and influential pioneer, but also as a waystation in a greater national cause.

Architecturally, the Willard Carpenter House is one of the few Greek Revival structures extant in Evansville. Although it has undergone several adaptive uses since it was last occupied by a descendent of Carpenter in 1934, the structure has retained many of the elements which distinguished it as one of the outstanding residences in Vanderburgh County.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Evansville and Its Men of Mark. Edward White, ed. Historical Publishing Co. (Evansville, 1873), pp. 326-347.

Gilbert, Frank M. History of the City of Evansville and Vanderburgh County Pioneer Publishing Co. (Chicago, 1910), vol. 11, pp. 122-126.

(see continuation sheet)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY about 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

| | | | | | | | |
|---|------|-------------|---------------|---|------|---------|----------|
| A | 1 6 | 4 4 9 4 6 0 | 4 2 0 3 0 0 0 | B | | | |
| | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING | | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING |
| C | | | | D | | | |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Not applicable

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

Mr. John M. Dunni, Chairman of the Board

ORGANIZATION

Medco Centers, Inc.

DATE

February 7, 1974

STREET & NUMBER

405 Carpenter Street

TELEPHONE

(812) 422-3231

CITY OR TOWN

Evansville,

STATE

Indiana 47703

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

TITLE

Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

June 21, 1977

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER