

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service  
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: Charter, Lathrop Russell, House  
other name/site number: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number: 109 High Street not for publication: n/a  
city/town: West Union vicinity: n/a  
state: West Virginia code: WV county: Doddridge code: 017 zip code: 26456

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally.  
( See continuation sheet.)

William C. Lanier 2.16.93  
Signature of Certifying Official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau Date

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Certifying Official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

L.R. Charter House  
property name

Doddridge, WV  
county and state

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4. National Park Service Certification

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I, hereby certify that this property is:

Signature of Keeper      Date  
of Action

_____ entered in the National Register	_____	_____
___ See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
_____ determined eligible for the	_____	_____
National Register	_____	_____
___ See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
_____ determined not eligible for the	_____	_____
National Register	_____	_____
_____ removed from the National Register	_____	_____
_____ other (explain): _____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

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5. Classification

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Ownership of Property:  
(check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property  
(check only one box)

- private
- public-local
- public-state
- public-federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

NUMBER OF RESOURCES WITH PROPERTY  
(do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>		buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	TOTAL

NAME OF RELATED MULTIPLE PROPERTY LISTING n/a  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

NUMBER OF CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES PREVIOUSLY LISTED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER. 0

L.R. Charter House  
property name

Doddridge, WV  
county and state

=====

6. Function or Use

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HISTORIC FUNCTIONS

(enter categories from instructions)

CURRENT FUNCTIONS

(enter categories from instructions)

domestic/single dwelling

domestic/single dwelling

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7. Description

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ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION:

(enter categories from instructions)

MATERIALS

(enter categories from instructions)

late Victorian/Italianate

foundation stone

walls brick

roof metal/tin

other wood

metal

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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8. Statement of Significance

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APPLICABLE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

L.R. Charter House  
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CRITERIA CONSIDERATIONS

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.  
 B removed from its original location.  
 C a birthplace or grave.  
 D a cemetery.  
 E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.  
 F a commemorative property.  
 G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE

(enter categories from instructions)

architecture

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PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE

1877

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SIGNIFICANT DATES

n/a

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SIGNIFICANT PERSON

(complete if criterion B is marked above)

n/a

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CULTURAL AFFILIATION

n/a

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ARCHITECT/BUILDER

unknown

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NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

L.R. Charter House  
property name

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county and state

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS): n/a

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- other state agency
- federal agency
- local government
- university
- other repository name: \_\_\_\_\_

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property: 1 acre

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing      Zone Easting Northing

1	<u>17</u>	<u>519570</u>	<u>4349240</u>	2	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
3	_____	_____	_____	D	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing See

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheets.)

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheets.)

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11. Form Prepared By

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name/title: Stacy Sone, structural historian

organization: WV SHPO      date: December 16, 1992

street & number: Cultural Center      telephone: 304-558-0220

city or town: Charleston      state: WV ZIP: 25305

L.R. Charter House  
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county and state

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ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION  
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Submit the following items with the completed form:

CONTINUATION SHEETS

MAPS

-USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

-sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

PHOTOGRAPHS

-representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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PROPERTY OWNER  
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(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name: Frank & Kay Sunderland

street & number: 109 High Street telephone: 304-873-1074

city or town: West Union state: WV ZIP: 26456  
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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

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Charter House  
Doddridge County, WV

The L.R. Charter House, located at the end of High Street in West Union, is an intact and representative example of the Italianate style. The two-story house, constructed in 1877, remains substantially unaltered from its original appearance when the Charter family occupied the house. The building's most significant characteristics are its size; tall, crowned windows; low-pitched, hipped roof with broad, bracketed eaves; and two-story side porch. The Charter house has undergone few alterations and it retains the characteristics that are most illustrative of the Italianate style.

The house sits on a coursed, rough stone foundation and under a its original metal roof. It has a T-shaped plan and an intersecting hipped roof.

The front main block of the house is a symmetrical two-story box with three bays across both levels of the front and one bay of paired windows on the side. The main entrance faces south towards High Street. The panelled double doors are located in the center of the facade. The doors stand behind the original wooden storm doors in a segmental-arched frame. A molded, wooden crown tops the opening.

The house's porch was recently removed because of its rotted condition but photographs taken during the 1970's reveal a typical Italianate porch located in front of the center bay. Arched openings, broad fluted supports, and a bracketed cornice adorned the porch. The porch supported a balcony above with a closed railing and finials on its corners. Tall, paired windows stand directly over the entrance and open onto the balcony. These windows and all other windows on the main block of the house stand in segmental arched openings and display decorative metal crowns over the top.

Other decorative features that embellish the house are the brick quoins that define each corner, the corbelled brick string course under the roofline, and the paired center chimneys. Another characteristic typical of Italianate houses is the bracketed roofline. The brackets across the eaves are small, simple, and decorative. On the corners of the house and over the brick pilasters flanking the entrance bay are larger, more elaborate scroll brackets that are only decorative but appear to be holding the broad eaves. The low-pitched hipped roof with its overhanging eaves and pronounced brackets, recalls the style's Italian Renaissance roots from which it is derived.

The building's three-story rear wing was probably constructed at the same time or shortly after the front section. It was built more simply than the front section but still displays the same Italianate detail. The windows and doors stand in segmental arched openings and have exterior shutters. The

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Doddridge County, WV

crowns over the windows are similar to those on the front but on the wing, they are made of brick flush with the wall. On the east side of the rear wing is a two-story porch under a hipped roof.

The house's grounds contribute significantly to its setting. It is situated prominently on the end of a hill in the town's highest point. The yard on the east side of the house is terraced and is perfectly suited for a flower garden. A small house on the property which was once a city surveyor's office is a contributing building that the current owners now use as a guest house. It is a front gabled frame building with a car port attached.

The house's interior remains intact and displays some of its most significant features. It contains the original interior wooden shutters, ceiling medallions, cast metal fireplaces, and panelled doors. The interior retains its original room arrangement except for the earlier dining room which is now the kitchen and the old kitchen which is now a dining nook. The current dining room was originally a parlor.

Except for the missing porch, the house retains its original appearance. The current owners bought the house after it had been abandoned for several years and had fallen into disrepair. They have carefully restored the house so it retains the qualities that are characteristic of the Italianate style.

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Doddrige County, WV

The Charter house is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under criterion C in the area of architecture. Constructed in 1877 for Dr. L.R. Charter, the house is intact and representative of the Italianate style. It displays typical Italianate characteristics such as a low-pitched hipped roof, bracketed cornice, panelled front doors, and crowned windows. The house is in excellent condition and has undergone only minimal alterations so that it retains its architectural integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and location.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, the well-known architect and pattern-book writer A.J. Downing introduced a variety of house types in the United States in reaction to the formal classical styles that had dominated house design for more than a century. Traditional styles, Downing argued, were stark looking, inflexible, and unsuitable for private residences.

The introduction of the new balloon frame, which was a lighter and stronger method of construction, allowed Downing and other pattern-book writers to design houses with more flexible plans that were easier to build. Reform-minded architects, with Downing in the lead, began to design houses in the 1840's that they believed were functional, livable, and suited to the surrounding landscape. He introduced the Gothic revival style first which was designed to be a family's perfect setting for Christian nurture. This style emphasized a steeply-pitched roof, pointed dormers, and decorative woodwork in the gables. The most popular mid-century style that Downing promoted was called bracketed. This was the most modest of all the new styles and was characterized by simple, functional plans and heavy brackets under the eaves.

Another popular design that was more formal than the bracketed type was the Italianate style. These houses were inspired by those in the Mediterranean and were identified by their asymmetrical plan, flat-roofed tower, and a broad porch. The Italianate style that Downing initiated resembled Italian villas and because of its size and complexity, very few were built. What did become popular, however, was a variation of the bracketed and formal Italianate styles. These were built nation-wide in a variety of sizes and shapes for wealthy and middle-class Americans during the mid nineteenth century.

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Doddridge County, WV

Downing popularized the Italianate style and it quickly spread to cities throughout the country including growing cities in West Virginia. A variety of Italianate houses were built in Wheeling, Clarksburg, and Fairmont, West Virginia. While the style thrived in the cities, house builders in rural areas also became familiar with the style and requested it for their own houses.

Dr. L.R. Charter was on such person who chose a fashionable new style for his West Union house. Charter, who studied medicine in New England, came to West Union in 1845 and began his practice as a physician and surgeon. The well-known and highly respected resident built his house in 1877 in the popular Italianate style. It is likely that he traveled widely and would have been familiar with the latest trends in house design from visits to nearby cities.

The house Charter remains as one of the state's exemplary Italianate houses and is significant as a high-style Italianate house in a rural area. Although the style is well-represented in West Virginia's northern cities, it is less often found, with as much detail, in rural towns. The house beautifully displays the characteristics of the style. Its low-pitched hipped roof, overhanging eaves, and bracketed roofline are typical of the style as are the crowned windows, and panelled doors. The interior remains intact with its original wood floors, cast-iron fireplaces, ceiling medallions, and chandelier. The current owners have carefully maintained the house so that it stands unaltered from its 1870's appearance.

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9. bibliography

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Comstock, Jim. Hardesty's West Virginia Counties; Doddridge. Richwood, WV: 1973.

Downing, A. J. The Architecture of Country Houses. New York: D. Appelton and Co., 1850. Reprint, New York: Dover Publications, 1969.

Earl, J.A. A Biographical History of Schools and Education in Doddridge County, WV. WV State Archives, unpublished material, 1958.

\_\_\_\_\_. The History of Methodism in Doddridge County and West Union with Related Church and State History. WV State Archives, unpublished material, 1958.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984.

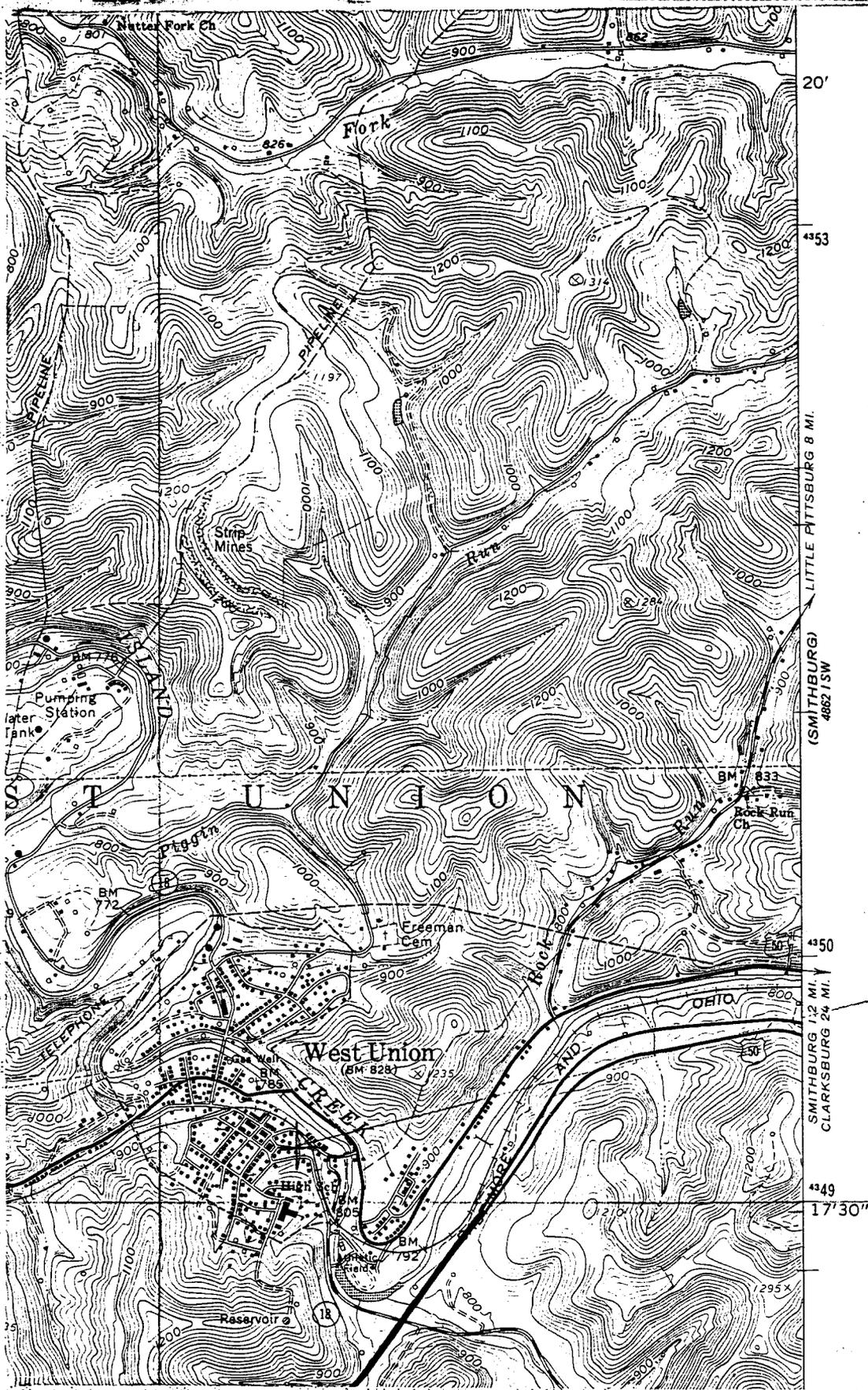
Sunderland, Frank and Kay, property owners. site visits, November 11 and 19, 1992.

10. verbal boundary description

parcel number 159 and 159.1, sheet 03 of West Union Corporation tax map; April 1962

boundary justification

The boundary includes all of the property historically associated with the L.R. Charter House.



L.R. Charter House  
 109 High Street  
 West Union, Doddridge Co., WV  
 17/519570/4349240  
 West Union quad

