

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: West Virginia	
COUNTY: Mineral	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Fort Ashby

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
South Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Fort Ashby

STATE West Virginia	CODE 54	COUNTY: Mineral	CODE 057
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY cf. also continuation page.

OWNER'S NAME:
Potomac Valley Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution

STREET AND NUMBER:
c/o Mrs. Elton D. Gourley, 119 Wood Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Westernport

STATE:
Maryland

CODE:
24

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Mineral County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Keyser

STATE:
West Virginia

CODE:
54

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:

CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:
COUNTY:
ENTRY NUMBER
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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
West Virginia	
COUNTY	
Mineral	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
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(Number all entries)

4. Owner of Property - continued

Mr. Floyd Wagoner
South Street
Fort Ashby, West Virginia

5. Location of Legal Description - Continued

Mineral County Courthouse
Keyser, West Virginia

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Originally Fort Ashby was surrounded by a stockade. Archeological work no doubt could confirm this, since at the rear of the fort there is only a garden and behind that a field stretching back to a stream, beyond which there is a log structure and remnants of an old mill.

The fort always stood in its present location. It consisted of a basement, a first floor divided into two sections by a huge fireplace, open only at the rear, which allowed passageways on either side, and a second story which consisted of one large room.

The building was converted to a private dwelling after the French and Indian War, often changing hands since that time. It now stands in a row of houses, but across the road the only building is a schoolhouse.

According to Mrs. Floyd Wagoner, who has lived next door since 1936, the fort was in a dilapidated condition before restoration in 1938-39. Restoration consisted of roof repair and replacement of a few decaying logs.

Also interviewed was Mr. Edgell Pyles, born in the fort in 1923, his family having purchased the home March 14, 1919, from Samuel and Martha Oglesbee. He remembers the fort as it is now except that the interior was divided into several rooms including two in what is now the front of the house.

J. C. Sanders, writing in 1940, gives the following description of the fort:

The old fort is of the blockhouse type, thirty by thirty-six feet. The projecting second story has long since decayed. The foundations are of stone and the outer walls are of hewn logs chocked with lime and clay mortar. The "inside center" chimney, which is sixteen and one-half feet wide, is said to have been used as a protecting barricade, as well as for heating purposes. The logs used in construction vary in thickness from eight to nine inches, and in width from twelve to twenty inches. The sill logs and several others are continuous timbers, thirty-six feet long. The corners are overlapped logs joined by interlocking dovetail joints. The workmanship in the joinery indicates that the highest type of artisans were employed in construction, although the builders were rude Virginia frontiersmen.

On closer examination, one may observe that the logs are pitted with cavities which appear to be bullet holes and arrow impacts. As the depressions are clearly from dry rot and borer holes, the correctness of this assumption seems all the more evident. A large timber beam extends down the center of the fort and acts as a summer beam for the second story joists. These rest directly on this beam instead of being tenoned into it. This is typical of early pioneer framing.

The outside doors are hung from wrought-iron strap hinges, and the full length of the door is reinforced with handmade, ornamental nails and drops nailed to the jambs. The inside doors are hung by -H- and -L- handmade, wrought-iron hinges, typical

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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
West Virginia	
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7. Description - continued.

of the age in which the fort was built. Wrought-iron latches and keepers serve the doors as locks.

Note: Sanders assumes second story was an overhang, like a blockhouse. Mr. Grimm, rebuilder of Ft. Ligonier, after examining photographs of Ft. Ashby sees no difficulty in accepting the present appearance of the fort as the original. The present condition of the original logs would indicate that householders prior to 1904 (date of sketch) would have had no reason based on decay for changing the upper part of the building.

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)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Fort Ashby is a monument to the defensive strategy of Governor Dinwiddie of Virginia, sobered by the prospect of French and Indian attacks following Braddock's Defeat in the Battle of Monongahela in 1755.

Dinwiddie gave general orders for a score of forts from the upper Potomac valleys to the Holston River in Tennessee. Because of its extremely exposed position, Patterson Creek, in what is now Mineral County, was one of the first streams to be fortified.

In 1755 Fort Ashby was erected near the east bank of Patterson Creek, 12 miles up stream from where it empties into the Potomac. Fort Ashby was named for its commander, Captain John Ashby, son of Thomas Ashby, for whom Ashby's Bent in the Blue Ridge Mountains was named. George Washington was a guest of Captain Ashby on the Shenandoah while surveying on March 12, 1748. It is presumed this is the same Captain Ashby who guided Washington for some distance during his 1784 visit to Western Virginia and who was later a guest at Mount Vernon.

Captain Ashby's company assisted Lieutenant Richard Bacon in the building of two strong 90-foot square forts, one of which was Parker's; ten miles from Ft. Ashby, on the South Branch of the Potomac. It is presumed from Washington's letters that Fort Ashby, like these forts, was stockaded, and that the present structure served as the barracks for the soldiers, who at times numbered up to seventy.

There are almost twenty references to Fort Ashby or its garrison in Washington's correspondence, but he considered the Patterson Creek stockades as a backup to the more heavily fortified structures on the South Branch. Fort Ashby was to provide cover for the Rangers "and receptacle now and then for provisions."

Washington's orders to Captain Ashby were stern. In 1755, if compelled to retreat, he was to go "no further than Joseph Edwards on Cacapehon." When Ashby reported four hundred Indians had surrounded his fort on April 15, 1756, demanding its surrender, Washington commanded him to defend at all costs, and if he retired, to blow up the fort.

Desertion from Fort Ashby was frequent, and at one juncture Washington ordered Ashby to send away his wife, "the chief of every mutiny," to regularize his handling of rum, and to forward a monthly accounting of his bills.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
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8. Significance - continued.

Family tradition relates John Ashby's close escape from a vengeful, long-legged Indian known locally as "The Crane." Surprised on the hill, Ashby outraced him to the fort.

In August of 1756, Lieutenant Robert Rutherford, with a company of Rangers, whom he had organized, was defeated here by the Indians, in a battle reflected by bullets later dug out of the barracks walls. Rutherford, a native of Scotland, later served in both houses of the Virginia legislature and finally (1793-1799) the United States Congress. He played a prominent role in the Virginia government's organization both before and after the Revolution. He was living in Jefferson County, Virginia, at the time of his death in 1805.*

Other prominent leaders of events in or around Fort Ashby include Captain Charles Lewis, Colonel Henry Peyton, Lieutenant Newgent, and Captain William Cocke. Captain Lewis was killed in Dunmore's War. In 1794 General Daniel Morgan camped here on his way to suppress the Whiskey Rebellion. At that time five hundred troops were held in reserve at Fort Ashby.

For many years after the Indian threat had ceased, the fort was used as a home. To prevent the fort's destruction, it was purchased in 1927 by the Potomac Valley Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution. The fort was deeded to the Mineral County Court to make it eligible for restoration under the WPA in 1938. It was subsequently returned to the ownership of the D.A. R. and is now open to the public during the summer months. It has been furnished appropriately.

The community in which the fort stands was incorporated as Frankfort December 5, 1787, with a post office later named Alaska. The name was changed to Fort Ashby in 1932.

* This is doubtless the Robert Rutherford who acquired 2,500 acres on the Little Kanawha River which George Washington thought that Captain William Crawford had promised to him rather than Rutherford. C. R. Rector states that "To this day a line running away from the river at Kanawha Bend is called 'the old Rutherford line.'"

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Sanders, J. C. "Old Fort Ashby." West Virginia History, vol. 1, no. 2 (Jan. 1940), pp. 104-109.
 Hunt, J. William. "Fort Ashby Only One Preserved." Cumberland Sunday Times, April 16, 1967.
 Lewis, Captain Charles. Journal. Collections of the Virginia Historical Society, vol. XI, Richmond, 1892.
 Fitzpatrick, John C., Writings of Washington. vol. 1, passim.
 Bates, Col. Robert L. "Rutherford's Rangers." Magazine of the Jefferson County Historical Society. vol. 4 (Dec. 1938) pp. 4-18.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			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	° ' "	° ' "	39 °	30 ' 19.02"	78 ° 45 ' 56.69"
NE	° ' "	° ' "			
SE	° ' "	° ' "			
SW	° ' "	° ' "			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 0.41 acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
 Clifford M. Lewis, S.J.

ORGANIZATION: in contract with the W. Va. Antiquities Commission DATE: Sept. 19, 1970

STREET AND NUMBER:
 Wheeling College

CITY OR TOWN: Wheeling STATE: West Virginia CODE: 54

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

Name Dallas B. Shaffer
 Dallas B. Shaffer
 Title State Liaison Officer

Date October 9, 1970

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

 Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

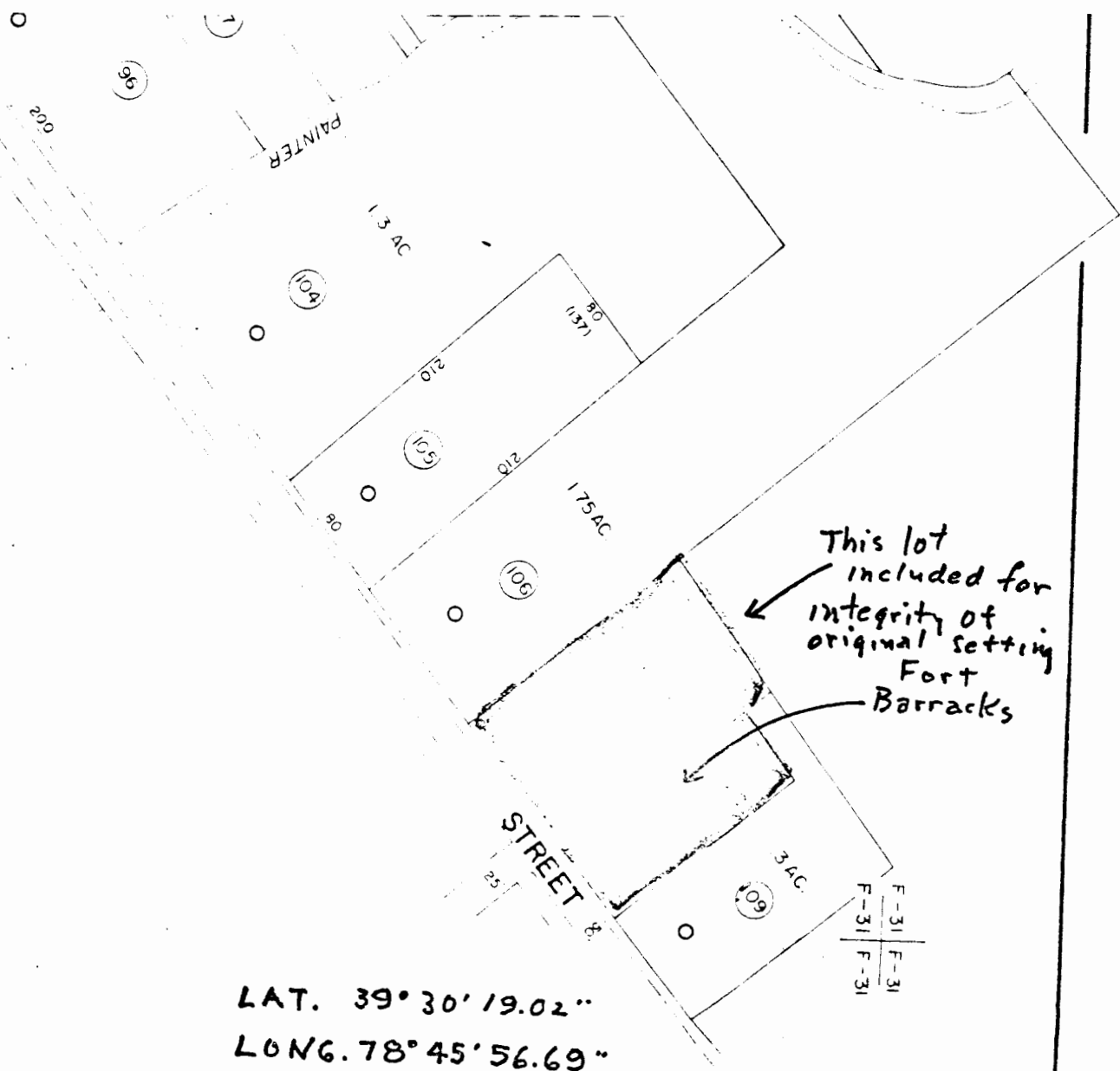
PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

COUNTY	
Mineral	
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1. NAME			
COMMON: Fort Ashby		AND/OR HISTORIC:	
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: South Street			
CITY OR TOWN: Fort Ashby			
STATE: West Virginia	CODE: 54	COUNTY: Mineral	CODE: 057
3. MAP REFERENCE			
SOURCE: Office of Assessor Mineral County, West Virginia			
SCALE: 1"=100'			
DATE: Dec. 1958			
4. REQUIREMENTS			
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Property boundaries where required. North arrow. Latitude and longitude reference. 			



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COMMON: Fort Ashby
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2. LOCATION
STREET AND NUMBER:
South Street
CITY OR TOWN:
Fort Ashby
STATE: West Virginia CODE: 54 COUNTY: Mineral

3. MAP REFERENCE
SOURCE: U. S. Geological Survey
Cresaptown Quadrangle
SCALE: 1:24000
DATE: 1949

4. REQUIREMENTS
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS
1. Property boundaries where required.
2. North arrow.
3. Latitude and longitude reference.

