## 1. NAME

**HISTORIC**

Carpenter, Willard House

**AND/OR COMMON**


## 2. LOCATION

**STREET & NUMBER**

405 Carpenter Street

**CITY, TOWN**

Evansville

**STATE**

Indiana

**LOCATION OF THE INTERIOR**

Form No. 10-300 (Rev. 10-74)

## 3. CLASSIFICATION

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## 4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

**NAME**

Medco Centers, Inc.

**STREET & NUMBER**

405 Carpenter Street

**CITY, TOWN**

Evansville

**STATE**

Indiana

**LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

**COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.**

Vanderburgh County Recorder

**STREET & NUMBER**

City-County Building

**CITY, TOWN**

Evansville

**STATE**

Indiana

## 5. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

**TITLE**

Historic American Buildings Survey (Indiana-24-11)

**DATE**

1934

**DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS**

Division of Prints and Photographs, Library of Congress

**CITY, TOWN**

Washington, D.C.
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 galleryed 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 fireplace, which may have been a later addition, is cast iron which has been marbleized.
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 crosettes. Whenever new doors have been added, every effort has been made to reproduce the original scheme.
SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD
—PREHISTORIC
—1400-1499
—1500-1599
—1600-1699
X1700-1799
—1800-1899
—1900-

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW
—ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC
—ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC
—AGRICULTURE
—ARCHITECTURE
—COMMERCIAL
—COMMUNICATIONS
—COMMERCE
—ENGINEERING
—EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT
—FUEL/ENERGY
—INDUSTRY
—INVENTION
—LAW
—LANDSPE ARCHITECTURE
—LITERATURE
—MILITARY
—MUSIC
—POLITICS/GOVERNMENT
—PREHISTORIC
—RELIGION
—SCIENCE
—SCULPTURE
—SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
—THEATER
—TRANSPORTATION
—ART
—ARCHITECTURE
—ARCHITECTURE
—CONSERVATION
—EDUCATION
—ENGINEERING
—EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT
—INVENTION
—LITERATURE
—MILITARY
—MUSIC
—POLITICS/GOVERNMENT
—RELIGION
—SCIENCE
—SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
—THEATER
—TRANSPORTATION

SPECIFIC DATES Constructed 1849-1850

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.
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES


(see continuation sheet)

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: about 1 acre

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ZONE EASTING NORTHING ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Not applicable

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

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FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE
Mr. John M. Dunn, Chairman of the Board

ORGANIZATION
Medco Centers, Inc.

STREET & NUMBER
405 Carpenter Street

CITY OR TOWN
Evansville, Indiana

DATE
February 7, 1974

TELEPHONE
(812) 422-3231

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL___ STATE___ LOCAL X

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

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 2-20-78

DATE 12-29-77
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Trustees of Willard Library. Statement of Trustees, June 1915.
ONE OF THE TEN GREEK REVIVAL BUILDINGS IN EVANSVILLE, AND SO FAR THE ONLY EVANSVILLE STRUCTURE TO BE COMPLETELY DOCUMENTED BY HABS (1934).

TWO STORIES WITH ATTIC STORY; STUCCOED BRICK IS SCORED TO SIMULATE DRESSED STONE. LOW PITCH HIPPED ROOF.

SYMMETRICAL, 5-BAY FACADE; CENTRAL ENTRANCE HAS PARAPET WITH SIMPLE ENTABLATURE AND PROJECTING CORNICE, AS DO THE TWO MORE RECENT SIDE ENTRANCES.

MAIN DOOR IS FLANKED BY PILASTERS, SIDE-LIGHTS, AND ANOTHER PAIR OF PILASTERS, AND ALSO HAS A TRANSOM AND CORNER LIGHTS.

WINDOWS ARE 6 OVER 6, WITH STONE SILLS & LINTELS CAPPED BY A PROJECTING MOLDING.

THE WINDOW OVER THE ENTRANCE PORCH HAS INSET FIXED SHUTTERS AND A SHAPED LINTEL. OTHER SHUTTERS ARE RECENT ADDITIONS. ATTIC WINDOWS ARE IN THE FRIEZE, WHICH IS DEFINED BY PROJECTING STONE STRING COURSES. DENTILS AND A PROJECTING CORNICE COMPLETE THE ENTABLATURE.

ORIGINAL TWO STORY GALLERIED ELL HAS BEEN REPLACED BY NEW ADDITION; BASIC PLAN, MOST WOODWORK AND ORNAMENTAL PLASTER AND FIREPLACE MANTELS SURVIVE.

WILLARD CARPENTER AMASSED A FORTUNE THROUGH MERCHANDISING, RAILROAD, AND REAL ESTATE, AND WAS A PROMINENT HUMANITARIAN RESPONSIBLE FOR FOUNDRING WILLARD LIBRARY.
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**No V.B.D.** Would like to see a photograph of addition to the rear. The house has a marker designating its importance as being an underground railway station, however, the statement of significance briefly allude itself to that.

**ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN**

Accept

Brattan 11/29/77

**ARCHEOLOGIST**

Accept

Brattan 11/29/77

**OTHER**

Accept

Brattan 11/29/77

**HAER**

Inventory

Review

**REVIEW UNIT CHIEF**

Accept

LEBOWICZ 12/23/77

**BRANCH CHIEF**

Accept

Brattan 12/29/77

**KEEPER**

Accept

Brattan 12/29/77

United States Department of the Interior  National Park Service  WASO No. 7
**1 NAME**

**HISTORIC**
Willard Carpenter House

**AND/OR COMMON**

**2 LOCATION**

**CITY, TOWN**
Evansville

**VICINITY OF**

**COUNTY**
Vanderburgh

**STATE**
Indiana

**3 PHOTO REFERENCE**

**PHOTO CREDIT**
Glenn Medcalf

**DATE OF PHOTO**
January, 1977

**NEGATIVE FILED AT**
Medco Centers, Inc.

**4 IDENTIFICATION**

**DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET**

Main (south) facade

**PHOTO NO.**
1.

**INT: 2983-75**
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

1 NAME
HISTORIC
Willard Carpenter House
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION
CITY, TOWN
Evansville
VICINITY OF
COUNTY
Vanderburgh
STATE
Indiana

3 PHOTO REFERENCE
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Glenn Medcalf
DATE OF PHOTO
January, 1977
NEGATIVE FILED AT
Medco Centers, Inc.

4 IDENTIFICATION
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET
Main facade and east elevation
with recent addition

PHOTO NO.
2.

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

FEB 10 1978
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSURE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

1 NAME
HISTORIC
Willard Carpenter House

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION
CITY, TOWN
Evansville

VICINITY OF

COUNTY
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STATE
Indiana

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PHOTO CREDIT
Glenn Medcalf

DATE OF PHOTO
January, 1977

NEGATIVE FILED AT
Medco Centers, Inc.

4 IDENTIFICATION
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT. GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

First floor parlor fireplace

PHOTO NO.
3.

INT: 2983-75
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES - ENCLOSE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

1 NAME
HISTORIC: Willard Carpenter House

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION
CITY, TOWN: Evansville
VICINITY OF: Vanderburgh
COUNTY: Indiana

3 PHOTO REFERENCE
PHOTO CREDIT: Glenn Medcalf
DATE OF PHOTO: January, 1977
NEGATIVE FILED AT: Medco Centers, Inc.

4 IDENTIFICATION
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET
View of first floor hall

PHOTO NO. 4

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
DOWNTOWN EVANSVILLE RESOURCES
Vanderburgh County, Indiana
N. Long, DMD 1977
#64: view north of
  405 Carpenter Street
#60 Willard Carpenter House
Dear Dr. Murtagh:

As the State Historic Preservation Officer for Indiana I am pleased to send you herewith the nomination forms for:

Willard Carpenter House (Vanderburgh County)
405 Carpenter Street
Evansville, Indiana

This nomination has been carefully discussed and reviewed at several meetings of the Indiana Professional State Consulting Committee and it is unanimously recommended.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Joseph D. Cloud
Director
Indiana Department of Natural Resources

JDC:mfs
ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE INDIANA

Date Entered FEB 10 1978

Name Location

Carpenter, Willard, House Evansville

Also Notified

Hon. Richard G. Lugar
Hon. Birch Bayh
Hon. David L. Cornwell
Regional Director, Midwest Region

State Historic Preservation Officer
Mr. Joseph D. Cloud
Director, Department of Natural Resources
608 State Office Building
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

880 Mott/js 2/22/78
**NATIONAL REGISTER DATA SHEET**

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**CLAIMS:** explain 'first' |

**ETHNIC GROUP ASSOCIATION** |

**ADDITIONAL SPACE NEEDED, NUMBER & PUT ON REVERSE**