

Washington Fire Company No. 2  
104 W. Third Street  
Madison  
Jefferson County  
Indiana

HABS No. IN-132

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42-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

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42-

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

WASHINGTON FIRE COMPANY NO. 2

HABS No. IN-132

Location: 104 West Third Street, Madison, Jefferson County, Indiana  
USGS Madison West Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator  
Coordinates: 16.640750.4288700

Present Owner: City of Madison, Indiana

Present Occupant: Washington Fire Company No. 2

Present Use: Fire house and meeting room

Significance: Believed to be the oldest firehouse in continuous use in Indiana, the Washington Fire Company occupies a simple brick building with Greek Revival-inspired pediment. The three original round-headed doorways were removed in 1964 and replaced by an overhead door. In 1848, Matthew Temperley and William or Isaac Dutton designed the firehouse which was completed by 1850.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1848-49. The Treasurer's Records of the City of Madison show that the original contract for the building of the Washington Fire Company was issued "as per sealed proposal July 11, 1848 ... for \$1575.00" to John Harrington. Harrington also was awarded an identical contract on the same day for the construction of the Fair Play Fire Company No. 1, listed under the same account in the Record of City Orders. Work on the Washington Fire Company began by August 18, 1848, when Harrington was issued \$600, and ended with his last payment on November 23, 1849.
2. Architect: The Record of City Orders paid \$6.00 to "Temperly and Dutton, for plans and specifications of Fire Engine Houses" on January 5, 1849. Matthew Temperly, a Madison architect and builder whose career spanned almost thirty years, was born in England in 1805. After emigrating to the United States, he married Rachel McClure in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, in 1827. They moved to Baltimore where many craftsmen were trained before settling in Indiana, including Madison's best-known architect, Francis J. Costigan. The Temperleys arrived in Madison from Indianapolis in 1833. Thus, the McKee-Powell-White House (1832) on Mulberry Street has been identified incorrectly as the work of Matthew Temperley and Sons in Wilbur Peat's Indiana Houses of the Nineteenth Century.

In 1838, Matthew Temperley designed and constructed with Abraham Todd the original Christ Episcopal Church at the corner of Grafton (now St. Michael's Avenue) and East Main Cross Streets. Temperley worked with either William or Isaac Dutton on designs for Fair Play Fire Company and the Washington Fire Companies; William Dutton shared an interest with Temperley in two acres of land at the east end of Madison near a sawmill, and Isaac Dutton was a carpenter who arrived in Madison between 1846 and 1848. Hired as a builder, Temperley constructed the W. Russell West-designed Christ Episcopal Church (HABS No. IN-123) on Mulberry Street in 1850. Later in 1856, Temperley was requested to erect a copy of West's design in Alton, Illinois, but it is not known if it was built.

3. Original and subsequent owners: The Washington Fire Company occupies Lot 60 in the First Addition West to the City Madison. In July, 1848, Lucius and Harriet Barbour sold the property, including Lot 59, to the City of Madison for \$525.
4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: Construction costs for the Washington Fire Company No. 2 and the Fair Play Fire Company No. 1 were recorded jointly in the Order Books of the City Treasurer under the heading "Fire engine houses." Both buildings were nearly identical in plan and appearance and required the same expenditures. According to the Order Books, two men were awarded contracts; one for construction and a second for finishing.

The Treasurer's disbursement entries record the construction costs of both engine houses. John Harrington, the major contractor, was paid \$2700 "on contract for building Fire Engine Houses," between August 19, 1848 and November 29, 1848. Richard Pindall received \$970 "to finish Engine Houses" between June 22, 1849 and December 5, 1849. William C. Bramwell was paid \$9.00 for "surveying and labor on Fire Engine House" in November 1849, and James Spratt and Company installed lightning rods for \$41.50 on December 20, 1850. The Washington Fire Company was reimbursed for the purchase of its bell on August 3, 1849.

5. Original plan and construction: The rectangular little-altered engine house is long and narrow. The first floor originally was divided into two spaces. The front room was used to house the fire equipment and the rear third was for stalls for the horses. The floor was wood, and the first-floor walls and ceilings were unfinished.

The second floor of the fire house was used for meetings and social events, and was decorated elaborately. The meeting room was divided by an open screen across the room. The screen, apparently original and much like the parlor screen in the

Shrewsbury House, has a Tuscan architrave with a red and gilt painted frieze, and lettering which reads, "Organized January 20, 1846, Washington Fire Company No. 2, Incorporated January 13, 1849." The architrave is supported by two partial columns and two engaged pilasters, each with capitals featuring floral motifs between lotus and acanthus leaves. The abacus over each capital is decorated with an anthemion and scroll borrowed directly from the window lintels of the J.F.D. Lanier House (HABS No. IN-23), designed by Francis J. Costigan. Two rectangular ceiling panels, originally for oil lamps or chandeliers, were altered later for a pair of grand gas chandeliers, now displayed in the Lanier house. The panels are decorated with alternating moldings, highlighted at the center with interwoven flowers and acanthus leaves.

6. Alterations and additions: The brick Greek Revival engine house had round-headed doorways. In 1964, the three arched doors were removed and a large overhead equipment door was installed. Other more minor additions were reported in the Minute Books:
  - 1901 A small furnace to heat water in the steam fire engine was installed. Mr. George W. Distel was paid \$77.50 for "digging and walling cellar." Cement replaced the wood floors of the horse stalls, put in by Stanley and Davis for \$44.
  - 1917 After the purchase of an "automobile apparatus," the Standing Committee ordered the stalls removed by a Mr. Clark.
  - 1922 The first floor of the engine house was wired for electricity for \$16.70. The sheds and other outbuildings at the rear were demolished. In September, a motion was made to cement the first floor, although John Haus didn't do the work until the spring when he was paid \$56.00 for twelve days of carpentry work.
  - 1923 Electricity for the second floor was installed by Madison Light and Power Co. for \$25.36.
  - 1925 The City Council Fire Committee's motion to fix the bell tower was approved in March. The Board of Health, new occupant of the second floor, requested that the Company paper the room; Charles Kahn received \$6.25 for paperhanging in July 7, 1925. John Haus put up a sign in the front of the Engine House, believed to be the present one.

- 1947 The Standing Committee received the metal for the first floor ceiling, purchased from Chris Eckert for \$99.57, which then was painted and installed by George Hoffman, Frank Phegley and Albert Jahries for \$214.50.
- 1951 The present cellar door was installed.
- 1953 The storm windows were put up by W. H. Miller and Son at a cost of \$76.00.
- 1963 The Engine House was roofed and rotted boards in the tower and roof were replaced.
- 1964 After the removal of the three arched doorways, a new overhead door was added, necessitating widening the driveway.

Another alteration not mentioned in the Minute Books was the enclosure of the screen in the meeting room before 1923. Plumbing was installed upstairs at the same time; the downstairs plumbing was installed earlier. The vented manhole cover on the engine room floor is marked "C.R. Johnson Machine Works, Madison, Indiana," and was installed in 1901 when the cellar was excavated to vent the heater. C.R. Johnson, who provided the cover, was Chief Director of the Fire Company.

B. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

- a. Deed Book, Jefferson County Courthouse Records, 1848.
- b. Journal of the City Treasurer, City Hall (basement), Madison, 1848-1852.
- c. Minutes of Fire Meetings of the Washington Fire Company No. 2, 1897-1967.
- d. Record of City Orders, City Hall (basement), Madison, 1848-1850.

2. Secondary and published sources:

- a. Madison Courier, February 16, 1856 (note of Temperley's Alton, Indiana, project); April 12, 1861 (obituary of Matthew Temperley); August 15, 1877 (obituary of Rachel McClure Temperley).

Prepared by: John Linn Hopkins  
Project Historian  
Summer, 1978

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Although the main facade has been altered, the Washington Fire Company house is a good example of a firehouse with Greek Revival details, still in use.
2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: The two-story firehouse measures approximately 27' (three-bay front) x 80'.
2. Foundations: Stone.
3. Wall construction, finish and color: Common bond brick painted gray.
4. Structural system, framing: Brick load-bearing walls with pegged mortise and tenon framing. The heavy timber structure on the bell tower is covered with sheet metal.
5. Chimneys: A brick chimney projects from the ground on the east wall near the rear and extends beyond the roof. A second brick chimney on the west wall is visible about 8' above the ground and extends only to the eave.
6. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: The main doorway, on the south wall at the southeast corner, has a wood surround, wood panel door, and a stone sill. The overhead door to the engine room, installed in 1964, has square wood panels, eight across, with a row of glass panels at the center. The rear doorway has wood surrounds, stone sill, and a wood door.
  - b. Windows: Casement windows on the first floor have six lights, wood surrounds, stone sills and aluminum storm sashes. The second-floor windows have six-over-six-light double-hung sash wood surrounds, stone sills and aluminum storm sashes.

7. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The gable roof has a standing seam metal covering, and the hipped roof of the bell tower has a flat metal covering.
- b. Cornice, eaves: The cornice on the east and west walls is formed of corbelled brick with a metal gutter. A boxed raking cornice at the front gable joins with a boxed horizontal wood cornice.
- c. Cupolas: The bell tower, located at the center of the roof near the front gable, has vertical pressed metal siding and a boxed wood cornice. The large fire bell reads "MENEELY'S ROTATING YOKE." A four-light casement window with wood surrounds is placed on the east face.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. First floor: The first-floor entrance is located in the stair vestibule and access to the engine room is gained through a large doorway. The engine room occupies the entire first floor and has a small toilet in the northeast corner. A doorway on the north leads to the outside.
  - b. Second floor: The stairway leads to the second-floor meeting room which has a small toilet in the northeast corner and a kitchen and bar at the north. A small storage room at the south has a ship's ladder leading to the bell tower.
2. Stairways: The enclosed wood stair along the west wall has an iron handrail at the wall and a molded handrail at the second floor. The wood balusters are turned.
  3. Flooring: The first floor is concrete and the second floor is wood. The meeting room floor is vinyl-asbestos covered.
  4. Walls and ceiling finish: Brick walls in the engine room are finished with 8' modern wood paneling and the ceiling is embossed metal. The plaster walls on the second floor have been covered with wood paneling about two-thirds the height of the room. The plaster band and ceiling are painted bright blue. The two large rectangular plaster ceiling medallions, painted red, white and blue, are richly decorated with bead and reel, water leaf, egg and dart and trumpet-like flower moldings. At the south end of the

meeting room, two fluted columns have lotus leaf capitals with a garland motif on the abacus, engaged to flat columns, forming a screen. A simple cornice molding rings the room.

5. Doorways and doors: All doors are wood with wood surrounds.
6. Mechanical equipment:
  - a. Heating: Forced air.
  - b. Electrical: Modern lighting fixtures.
- D. Site: The engine house is located on a residential street, facing south, with access by a concrete driveway and sidewalk.

Prepared by: John P. White  
Project Supervisor  
Summer, 1978

### PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey in cooperation with Historic Madison, Inc., and the Indiana Historical Society. Under the direction of John Poppeliers, Chief of HABS, and Kenneth L. Anderson, Principal Architect, the project was completed during the summer of 1978 at HABS field office, Madison, Indiana, by John P. White, Project Supervisor, (Associate Professor, Texas Tech University), John L. Hopkins, Project Historian (Skidmore College), and Student Architects Richard Berliner (Rhode Island School of Design), Jon Lourie (University of Maryland), Eric Swanson (Renssalaer Polytechnic Institute), and Peter Whitehead (State University of New York at Buffalo). The written data were edited by Jan Cigliano, HABS Historian, in November, 1978.

ADDENDUM TO  
WASHINGTON FIRE COMPANY NO. 1  
104 West Third Street  
Madison  
Jefferson County  
Indiana

HABS No. IN-132

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20013

ADDENDUM TO:  
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PHOTOGRAPHS

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National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
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