

Robinson, Daniel Webster, House

Burlington



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

RECEIVED MAY 17 1982

The Department of the Interior is pleased to inform you that the historic property listed on the enclosed sheet has been nominated by the State Historic Preservation Officer responsible for your State's implementation of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, P.L. 89-665 (80 Stat. 915), as amended. It has accordingly been entered in the National Register of Historic Places. A leaflet explaining the National Register is enclosed for your information and convenience.

Enclosures

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

STATE VERMONT

Date Entered APRIL 22, 1982

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Robinson, Daniel Webster, House	Burlington Chittenden County

Honorable James M. Jeffords
Honorable Robert T. Stafford
Honorable Patrick J. Leahy

Mid-Atlantic Regional Office, NPS
North Atlantic Regional Office, NPS

Notified

State Historic Preservation Officer
Mr. C. Harry Behney
Director, Vermont Division
for Historic Preservation
Pavilion Office Building
Montpelier, Vermont 05602



STATE OF VERMONT

AGENCY OF DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY (802) 828-3211

DEPARTMENTS OF:

Economic Development 828-3221

Housing & Community Affairs 828-3217

May 24, 1982

TWX 710-225-8100

MONTPELIER, VERMONT 05602

DIVISIONS OF:

Administration 828-3231

Historic Preservation 828-3226

Vermont Travel Division 828-3236

Vermont Life Magazine 828-3241

Alumnae Corporation, Alpha Iota
Chapter of Alpha Chi Omega
c/o Pat Collins
Nine Gail Terrace
Williston, Vermont 05495

Re: Daniel Webster Robinson Residence
384 and 388 Main Street
Burlington

Dear Ms. Collins:

We are pleased to inform you that the Daniel Webster Robinson Residence has been officially entered on the National Register of Historic Places.

If you desire further information regarding this nomination, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

DIVISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'William B. Pinney'.

William B. Pinney
Director/Deputy State Historic
Preservation Officer

WBP/ljc

cc: Mr. Bernard Sanders, Mayor, City of Burlington
Mr. William Blanchard, President, Board of Aldermen
Arthur Hogan, Executive Director, Chittenden County
Regional Planning Commission



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Vermont Travel Division 828-3236
Vermont Life Magazine 828-32-1

May 24, 1982

George W. Welsh III and Priscilla B. Welsh
388 Main Street
Burlington, Vermont 05401

Re: Daniel Webster Robinson Residence
384 and 388 Main Street
Burlington

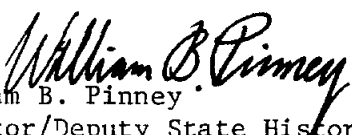
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WBP/ljc

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Regional Planning Commission



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DIVISIONS OF:

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Vermont Travel Division 828 3236
Vermont Life Magazine 828-3241

March 8, 1982

Carol Shull, Acting Keeper
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Ms. Shull:

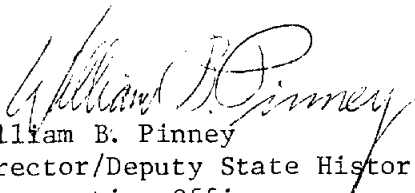
Enclosed please find the National Register nomination for
the following:

Daniel Webster Robinson Residence
Burlington, Chittenden County, Vermont

This property is being submitted under the Historic Preservation
Act of 1966, as amended in 1980, for inclusion in the National
Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely,

DIVISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION


William B. Pinney
Director/Deputy State Historic
Preservation Officer

WBP/ljc

Enclosures



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City of Burlington
Burlington, Vermont 05401

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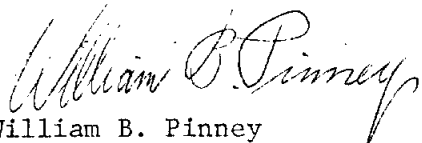
Dear Mayor Sanders:

We are pleased to inform you that the Daniel Webster Robinson Residence is being submitted to the National Park Service for consideration for entry in the National Register of Historic Places. Notification of acceptance or rejection of the property will follow.

Please feel free to contact us if any further information is desired.

Sincerely,

DIVISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION


William B. Pinney
Director/Deputy State Historic
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Mr. William Blanchard, President
Board of Aldermen
City of Burlington
Burlington, Vermont 05401

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cc: Arthur Hogan, Chittenden County Regional Planning
Commission



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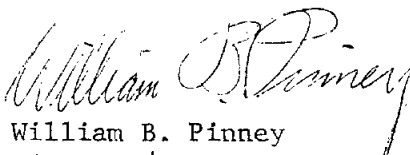
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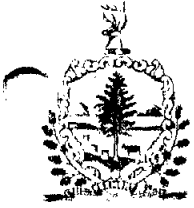
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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 Daniel Webster Robinson Residence

AND/OR COMMON 1. Alpha Chi Omega Sorority (House)
2. Welsh residence (carriage house)

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 1. 384 Main Street
2. 388 Main Street

N/A NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

CITY, TOWN Burlington

N/A VICINITY OF Vermont

STATE Vermont CODE 50 COUNTY Chittenden CODE 007

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 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	N/A <input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME 1. Alumnae Corporation Alpha Iota Chapter of Alpha Chi Omega
2. George W. Welsh III and Priscilla B. Welsh

STREET & NUMBER 1. 384 Main Street
2. 388 Main Street

CITY, TOWN Burlington

N/A VICINITY OF

STATE Vermont 05401

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Burlington City Clerk's Office, Room 20

STREET & NUMBER City Hall

CITY, TOWN Burlington

STATE Vermont 05401

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Vermont Historic Sites and Structures Survey

DATE May, 1979 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

CITY, TOWN Montpelier

STATE Vermont 05602

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT

GOOD

FAIR

DETERIORATED

RUINS

UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED

ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE

MOVED

DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Daniel Webster Robinson Residence is a transitional Shingle Style design by the Boston firm of Peabody and Stearns. Built 1885/6, the 3-story house is composed of a small rectangular main block with a gambrel-roofed rear ell. A covered piazza and porte cochere occur at either end of the front facade, and a short pavilion and a Georgian bow at opposing corners of the rear. These features, in addition to a corner turret, create shapes and roof lines with a picturesque effect, while cedar-shingle cladding, minimal ornament, and random window placement establish the informality of the Shingle Style. The carriage house is a 1 1/2-story building, gambrel-roofed with a front gable also of gambrel shape.

Fronting on the north side of Main Street, the Daniel Webster Robinson House is located in the hill section of Burlington just west of Williams Street and the University Green Historic District.¹ It has been the headquarters of the Alpha Iota Chapter of the Alpha Chi Omega Sorority since 1931, and neighboring properties are largely late 19th- and early 20th-century residences now in use by fraternal organizations or the university.

The lot on which the Robinson House stands is narrow and deep, sloping from east to west. To the rear of the property (north), is a carriage house which was part of the original building design. It was sold in 1949 and subsequently converted into a residence--a use which it still retains. A large hedge runs east-west, separating the two properties. Two drives--one threading through the porte cochere--lead from Main Street along the east side of the house into a small parking lot between the house and carriage house. On the west side of the house, immediately adjacent to the covered piazza sits a single-car, flat-roofed garage with short paved drive.

Although extensively remodeled, the carriage house is a contributing structure in the nomination of the Robinson residence because it was part of the Peabody and Stearns design and because its form, as viewed from the public way, is the same as that originally built. The small garage is of no significance and is therefore considered non-contributing.

The residence of Daniel Webster Robinson was built 1885/6 and designed by the Boston firm of Peabody and Stearns in the Shingle Style. However, it is very much a transitional design, incorporating both the picturesque impulses of the earlier Queen Anne style and the restraint of the developing Georgian Revival. The main picturesque elements are achieved by the emphasis on verticality in the main block, the varied roof heights and shapes (from gable to gambrel), a steeply pitched wall gable, the corner turret, and small paned windows. The more formal manner of the Georgian Revival is embodied by a 3-sided bow on the northwest corner of the house. The bow has the only distinctly emphasized, classical cornice treatment of the entire exterior design. The Robinson House is, however, very much contemporary with

¹Listed in the National Register of Historic Places April 14, 1975.

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page One

Shingle Style developments. Most importantly, the overall appearance is relaxed. This is partly derived from the exclusive use of a sheathing material with an informal look--i.e. wood shingles. In addition, the minimal use of ornamentation, the informal placement of the windows, the piazzas along the front and sides all bespeak of a comfortable living environment.

The exterior as it appears today has changed very little from when it was originally built. The massing consists of two basic components with a few secondary sections. The main block faces Main Street; it is a narrow-fronted, 3-story unit with gable running across and a steeply pitched roof. On the rear (north facade) is a massive, gambrel-roofed ell slightly offset towards the east side, but with side walls recessed from those of the main block. The northwest corner of the main section breaks into a 3-sided bow, expressing on the exterior the formal dining area. On the opposite side the rear wall and roof of the main block extend laterally into a gable-roofed 2 1/2-story pavilion that contains the large staircase hall of the interior. This transitional segment elongates the appearance of the house, while complying with a narrow lot.

Throughout the building windows are asymmetrically placed, giving a random, casual look to the whole. They are, unless otherwise noted, set into rectangular openings with sawtooth trim above and simple moldings and sills. The windows are virtually flush with the main wall faces. There is a general ordering of windows throughout: on the 1st level, 20/1-light double-hung sash, and on the 2nd, 30/2-light double-hung sash. Basement windows are usually 8/2-light, set into rectangular openings with limestone lintels and sills. Virtually all windows have the original sash and are covered by aluminum storms. Front windows have what appear to be the original blinds. They are painted a deep green as are other trim areas of the house.

The house sits on a redstone underpinning of rock-faced blocks laid in random courses. Much of the tinted mortar and raised black joint work has become loose and fallen out. Some repointing has been done.

Roofs are all slate, except portions of the porte cochere which has wood shingles (pine shingles were originally specified for this part of the house) and areas of metal sheathing. The covered piazza on the southwest corner of the house has asphalt shingles.

A large, steeply pitched wall gable dominates the main facade of the house and is offset towards the east corner. This gable, as with the others, has a row of side-laid shingles as trim just under the roof line. A modest molding serves as roof-line edging throughout the house. In the gable at the 3rd-story level is a 30/2-light window which surmounts a smooth corbel-like bulge with shelf top. Cedar shingles continue as an unbroken, skin-sheathing over this protrusion. A polygonal corner turret at the 2nd-story level conceals the eastern edge of the gable face and highlights the covered piazza below which recedes along the parlor wall to the main entrance and its large, paneled oak door.

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Page Two

The small turret has narrow 1/1-light windows set into rectangular openings which sit above spandrel panels and a series of moldings. The cornice is topped by a steep polygonal cap--roofed in slate--with a crescent-shaped, man-in-the-moon weather-vane (original to the house).

Breaking out from the compact main block is an octagonal piazza which fans out from the southwest corner. The piazza has a simple cornice treatment and flat-topped arched openings supported by plain posts. It rests on a high foundation exposed by the sloping grade. The foundation is shingled in wood and has a slit in each face. The wooden balustrade along the piazza consists of rectangular balusters topped by a molded railing that mirrors the line created by the flat-topped arches above.

The piazza is extended as an open walkway along the front of the house, leading through a three-centered arched doorway to the covered entrance piazza and the porte cochere. The original balustrade that bordered the walkway--similar to that of the piazza--was replaced by a wrought iron balustrade.

The placement of the five window openings across the front--two on the 1st level, two on the 2nd, and one in the gable face--create an overall random appearance. This is continued on the east elevation with an 18/2-light window in the gable face and a 20/1-light on the 1st level.

Balancing the octagonal piazza is a porte cochere on the southeast side which is recessed from the main wall face and which broadens the house laterally with a low-sprung Richardsonian arched opening. The arch of the gable-fronted porte cochere is subtly accentuated with saw-tooth trim and shingled bands. The bottom shingle courses flare out above the underpinning--as they do around the house proper.

The east elevation has a great deal of visual variety caused by overlaying gables and the strong profiles of the corner turret, gambrel-roofed ell, and front wall gable. Window placement has a more formal organization in one area; the only banded treatment that occurs in the entire house design is on the projecting pavilion at the 2nd-story level where a series of windows light the large interior staircase. Three vertical 12/12-light windows are each topped by a small rectangular art-glass panel. The pavilion has a hooded gable peak clad in shingles under which is set an 18/2-light window. A small art-glass panel occurs on the 1st-story under the porte cochere.

The east elevation of the large ell has a service entry porch with shed roof and small side window, a window at the north end, and a ventilator. On the 2nd-story is a shed-type dormer with a 9/1-light window set into a shingled face that meets the rear of the pavilion. The kitchen is on the first floor of the ell.

The rear of the ell has a small projecting porch, with hipped roof, which is entered by a series of steps on the east side. A simple balustrade, posts with splayed tops, and a modest edging at the roof line form the ornament of this section. Windows on the rear of the ell are: a small 9/1-light window on the 1st story, a 24/2-light at

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Page Three

the 2nd story, and under the gable peak, two symmetrically placed windows, 12/2 each.

On the west elevation of the ell there are two closely spaced 15/2-light windows on the 1st story which are joined by a wooden sill course. A sole shed dormer--like that on the east side--with a 15/2-light window occurs on the story above.

The rear of the main block at the northwest corner forms a 2-sided bow of 3 stories on a high basement. Windows occur in the 3 faces and on 3 levels as follows: basement level--8/2; 1st story--20/1; 2nd story--30/2. The bow is capped by a very prominent classical cornice with frieze and dentils.

To this side has been added a 3-story fire escape--one of the few exterior changes--to accommodate the dormitory function of the house. Windows occur randomly: the one at the basement level is blocked; on the 1st floor only one occurs (20/1-light); on the 2nd, two windows of 30/2-lights are spaced at extreme ends of the wall face; and on the 3rd story, 15/2. A door opening has been added at the 3rd-story level to permit entry onto the fire escape. On the 1st floor, a double door leads from the library to octagonal piazza.

Of the two remaining chimneys, one occurs on the main facade just south of the gable ridge while the other on the west side of the gambrel. A third on the east side of the gambrel has been removed.

While the condition of the house is generally good, there are visible problems such as water-damaged areas on the exterior.

Although currently accommodating 23 live-in students, the house has undergone a relatively small amount of change. Care has been taken to keep the fine character of the public spaces intact. Sleeping chambers may have acquired a sink, but the remodeling has largely been confined to the kitchen, bathrooms, and basement. Some code changes have been required such as an enclosed furnace with fire-rated walls, emergency lights, and a fire door on the ell's service entry.

Some minor modifications have occurred. On the 2nd floor, the dressing room to the southeast chamber has been converted to a bathroom and the large servants chamber of the rear ell has been divided into two rooms. The kitchen was remodeled in the early 60s, but the china closet with ash woodwork remains intact and an iron cooking stove (1881 patent, Fuller and Warren, Troy, New York) is still in the kitchen.

The public spaces have been very well preserved including the fine wood finishes. A small vestibule with an oak paneled dado and a floral-patterned art glass window opens into a large staircase hall. The room showcases a red-brick mantelpiece and overmantel and a closed, doglegged staircase. The staircase is lit by the banded windows and art glass panels. To create a grand scale and open effect the first flight of stairs is of enlarged width and runs up to the open string of three stairs that connect the two short landings. Newel posts are paneled and balusters are of a beaded pattern on elaborate bases.

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Page Four

The mantelpiece and overmantel are executed in red brick with thin black joints and are separated by a polished black granite shelf. A plaster relief dominates the overmantel; it is of classical inspiration showing three rearing horses drawing a chariot and driver.

In the dining room, the mantelpiece and overmantel are of oak and have shelves, a center mirror and cove. As with the other fireplaces, the hearth is of unglazed red tile with black tile border.

The library has finely detailed wood bookcases organized into the classical divisions of base, pilaster strips, and cornice. The original overmantel of the fireplace has been replaced by a single large mirror, however the mantelpiece and shelf remain intact. The shelf is set on four consoles with tooled surface and raised patterns. The consoles separate three panels incised in a stylized floral design.

Doors are paneled and have fluted architraves with corner blocks. Single doors in the staircase hall (this is the most elaborate room of the house) and the dining room have a bowed frieze with denticular cornice. Sliding double doors lead from the hall to parlor, parlor to library, and library to dining room.

The house still has the original carriage house designed by Peabody and Stearns. It has undergone a number of exterior changes and complete interior change in order to accommodate a residential use. However, the basic form which is visible from the public way is that of the original design. The gambrel roof runs across and has a hooded gable peak, clad in shingles, at each end. The main facade has a centrally placed, gambrel-shaped wall gable, and on the north facade a long ell has been added to increase living space. A carport occurs on the east elevation and a patio on the west. The original shingle cladding is partly intact, although a large section of the front--where window changes had been necessary--has been replaced with gray vertical boarding. The double doors of the stable entrance and hayloft and the small side windows were replaced with large rectangular windows. The slate roof remains intact.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
14-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1885 - 1886

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Peabody & Stearns, Boston

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This 1885/86, Shingle Style residence was designed by a major architectural firm of the time, Peabody and Stearns of Boston, and signifies the rising success of an important Burlington lumber industrialist during the city's second boom period in the lumber trade. The house was built during a stylistically eclectic period; yet the choice was a style that draws a large measure of its appeal from the natural appearance of wood--certainly appropriate to the home of a man whose position had been secured by success in the lumber industry. Finally, the house is a well-executed, small-city example of the work of Peabody and Stearns--work which was widely published and set important design directions for the period. Architecturally the house reflects the restraint and order that was entering into the architectural design of the '80s, and it also reflects the antiquarian and picturesque bents of Robert Swain Peabody, the firm's design and business head.

Daniel Webster Robinson, born in Nashua, New Hampshire in 1843, attended Comer's Commercial College in Boston and later became associated with the lumber trade in Nashua. Moving to Burlington in 1864, he soon joined Lawrence Barnes & Co. Lawrence Barnes had established a yard in Burlington in 1856 and through his initiative helped restimulate the vitality of the city's lumber trade.

In the late eighteenth, early nineteenth centuries, the market for the rich timber along both sides of Lake Champlain was Quebec which exported to foreign markets. However, the opening of the Champlain Canal in 1823 brought access to growing U.S. markets, providing important links to the Erie Canal and the Hudson River.

By 1843, the supply of timber bordering on Lake Champlain was exhausted, bringing decline to Burlington's lumber trade. However, the city's economic upswing as a commercial shipping point came with the construction of the Rutland and Burlington and the Vermont Central railroads at the close of the decade. This coupling of rail and lake transportation capabilities established the city's new role as a lumber depot for transshipping: the rich timber reserves of Canada and the West could be connected through water and rail links with markets in the south and east.

The first Canadian lumber cargo destined for eastern markets came in 1850, and among the early businesses that developed in Burlington was that of Lawrence Barnes. Barnes realized the savings in freight that could accrue if rough lumber was dressed before shipping, and thus with this innovation gave new impetus to the lumber trade. The dressing and the manufacturing of wood into products such as sash doors, Venetian

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blinds, refrigerators, shipping boxes, house finish, etc. became a major part of the industry in the next decades.

As Barnes took on partners in 1859 and the next few years, the firm was organized under several names and locations: in Burlington, Whitehall, and Montreal, it was Lawrence Barnes & Co.; in Boston, D.N. Skillings & Co.; and at Detroit, Ogdensburgh, and Albany, C. & D. Whitney, Jr. & Co. Later the firm operated under Skillings, Whitney Bros. & Barnes. In 1873 Barnes sold his interest outside of Burlington and formed a partnership with his son and D. W. Robinson. When his son retired from the firm 5 years later, Lawrence Barnes and Robinson set up a co-partnership. A consolidation of firms came a year and one-half later, creating Skillings, Whitneys & Barnes Lumber Co. with headquarters in Boston. Robinson served as manager of the Burlington operation. He retained this position, later becoming a director, until 1897. Finally in that year he formed his own company, buying out the Burlington operation and becoming president of The Robinson-Edwards Company.

About the time Robinson would have been planning his house he was not only the manager of the local company but also the owner of a planing and molding mill in the area of the company's yards.¹ In 1886 he was made a director of the Howard National Bank, later becoming a vice president and holding both titles until 1904. By the time the City Directory of 1888 was published, he had moved from a modest building on South Union Street to his new residence at 384 Main Street. His new house was indicative of his rising career.

The location of this residence has some importance--for it was immediately down the hill and across the street from "Grassemount", the large estate of Lawrence Barnes. (Listed on the National Register of Historic Places on April 11, 1973.)

The block on which Robinson's residence was built was developed late, being subdivided into a number of lots only in 1883. Robinson assembled four lots fronting onto Main Street in June 1885, adding incrementally to the width and depth of his land between 1886 and 1901.

Robinson was a prominent citizen. He served as vice president of the Burlington Trust Company and the Burlington Safe Deposit Company; he was commissioner from Vermont to the World's Columbian Exposition and served as an officer in a number of antiquarian societies including a term of presidency for the Robinson Family Genealogical and Historical Association.

Just preceding the building of Robinson's house was the construction of the Billings Library designed by H. H. Richardson. Though there is little reference to Richardson's work except in the low-sprung arch of the porte cochere, there is an

¹The 1886/7 Burlington City Directory lists him for the first time as the proprietor of a mill--in addition to his manager position with the lumber firm.

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interesting note in the specifications prepared by Peabody and Stearns regarding the underpinning. It was "to be carefully pointed and to show a black joint with a round section like that on the 'Billings Library'."

Robinson chose a Boston architectural firm of well-known reputation for his house design. Peabody and Stearns had worked through the gamut of styles that became fashionable from 1870 on when the firm was formed and they had extensive experience with house designs of every type from monumental-scale Newport cottages to city houses.

Early in his career Robert Swain Peabody saw in the colonial architecture of America a "native source of antiquarian study and inspiration." He was one of the early proponents of drawing from it for contemporary work. In an article entitled "Georgian Homes of New England" (American Architect, 1877) he also seemed to appreciate certain aspects of the earliest colonial buildings. He noted that "the Fairbanks House at Dedham, partly early with high-pitched roof and partly later with gambrel roof forms a most picturesque pile . . .".

Though a product of the restraint of the mid '80s, the Robinson House still preserved some of the picturesque effects of early colonial architecture that Peabody had discussed almost ten years earlier. The steep pitched gable of the main block and the large gambrel ell create a mass with picturesque roof effects that Peabody admired in his 1877 article. The house design further references the medieval look of early colonial building with small-paned windows, a corner turret--Peabody was enamoured of towers in every form through his career--and a large wall gable. However, the subtle use of a Georgian bow with classical cornice brings in the more academic concerns which were to dominate the firm's later work. The piazzas and porte cochere which broaden the house laterally, the simplicity of materials and ornament, the emphasis on a natural look with wood shingles as a sheathing material, and the easy flow of interior spaces were all part of the very contemporary Shingle Style. This house design is then an important reflection of a transition in design thought by a major American architectural firm that set directions for its times.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .72

QUADRANGLE NAME Burlington

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 18 642830 4926150

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundaries of the nominated property are those of the original Daniel W. Robinson residence and of the present owners: (1) the Alumnae Corporation Alpha

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

STATE N/A CODE N/A COUNTY N/A CODE N/A

STATE N/A CODE N/A COUNTY N/A CODE N/A

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Miriam Trementozzi, Preservation Consultant

DATE May 15, 1981

ORGANIZATION

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

82 Church Street

TELEPHONE

(802) 658-3149

CITY OR TOWN

Burlington,

STATE

Vermont 05401

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

William B. Pinnney

TITLE

Asst SHPO

DATE

5-2-82

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

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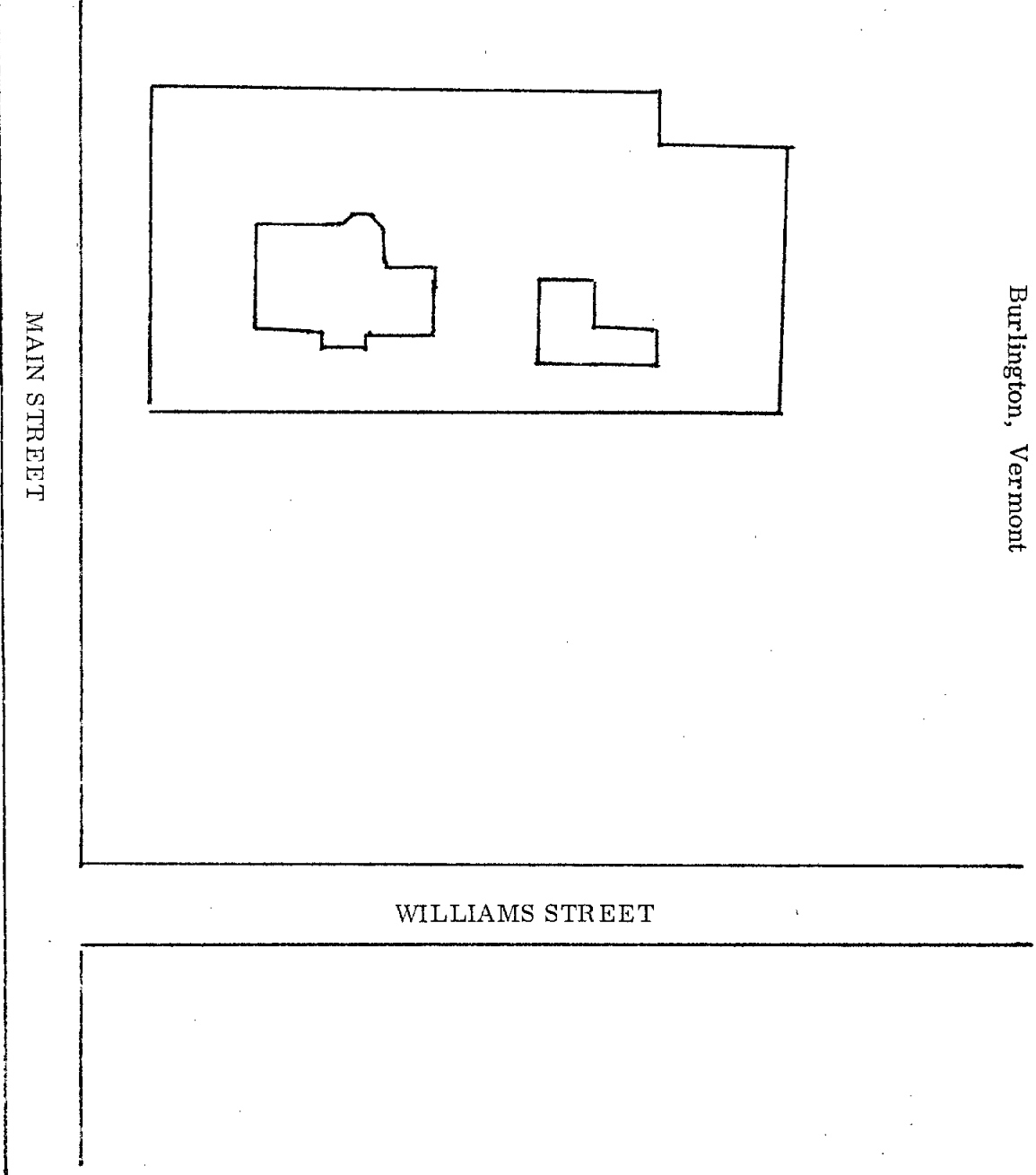
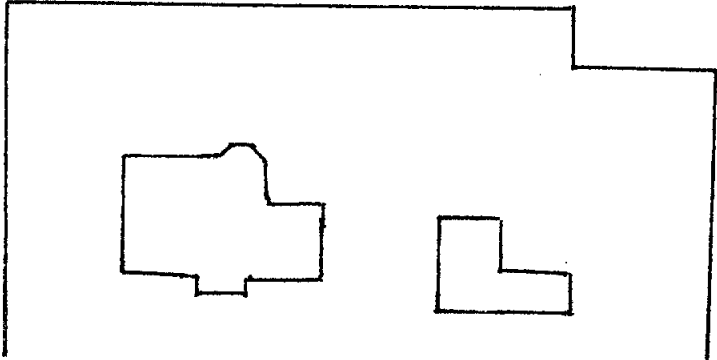
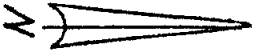
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Iota Chapter of Alpha Chi Omega (384 Main Street), and, (2) George W. Welsh III and Priscilla B. Welsh (388 Main Street). This property, 125 ft. frontage x 207 ft. depth plus an adjoining rear lot approximately 84 ft. x 55 ft., is delineated in the City of Burlington records as follows: Vols. 19 (p. 322--plan); 20 (p. 443, 553); 31 (p. 211, 216); 37 (p. 11, 119); 44 (p. 524); 132 (p. 643).

DANIEL WEBSTER ROBINSON
RESIDENCE
Burlington, Vermont



Map not to scale

6373 III SE
COLCHESTER
POINT

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

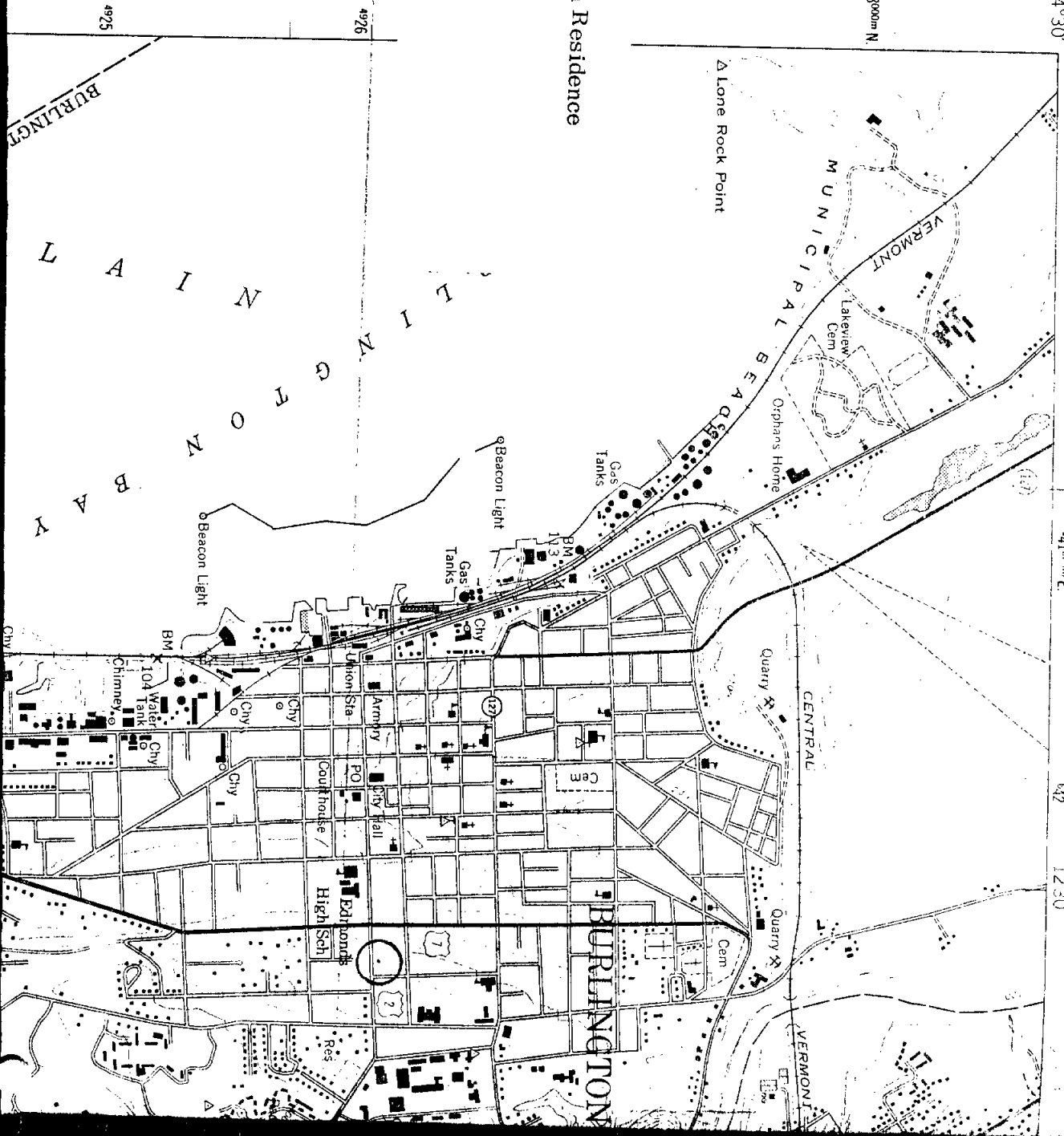
44°30' 73°15'

641 100m E

642

12°30'

4978000m N



Daniel Webster Robinson Residence
Burlington, Vermont

UTM References:
A/18/642830/4926150

4925

4926

BURLINGTON

L A K E
C H A M P L A I N
B A Y

BURLINGTON

CENTRAL

VERMONT