

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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

For NPS use only

received **AUG - 1 1983**
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Watson House

and/or common Coombs House

2. Location

street & number 1015 Water Street^e N/A not for publication

city, town Charlestown N/A vicinity of

state Indiana code 018 county Clark code 010

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<u>N/A</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Robert Coombs

street & number 1015 Water

city, town Charlestown N/A vicinity of state Indiana 47111

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Clark County Courthouse

street & number Court Avenue

city, town Jeffersonville state Indiana 47130

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory
Department of Natural Resources has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date August, 1979 federal state county local

depository for survey records Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology
Indiana State Museum

202 N. Alabama Street
city, town Indianapolis state Indiana

7. Description

Condition

excellent

good

fair

deteriorated

ruins

unexposed

Check one

unaltered

altered

Check one

original site

moved

date N/A

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Watson House might best be described as being in the Free Classic style. It remains in its original condition except for a wrought iron front door, and modern roofing shingles on the house (although the front porch retains its original wood shingles).

Built in about 1900, the two story frame house is basically rectangular in shape, with the short end facing the street, and with its front corners beveled. The most prominent feature on the house is the front porch, which extends across the front (southeast) facade, stopping short of the beveled corners. Supported by slender columns, the porch features a pediment over the entrance, a spindled railing, and a fairly detailed frieze and cornice with dentils and Greek fret molding. Opening onto the porch are a door on the right and a window on the left. Directly above these two openings on the second story are two windows. All openings on the house have very simple moldings.

Above the second story is a frieze with dentils, and modillions supporting a cornice. This cornice surrounds the house except in the center front, where it is broken just below a dormer. This large dormer is centered on the front facade, and has small-paned casement windows, and a pedimented roof. The house roof is steeply pitched and hipped, pierced by two tall chimneys.

Each of the beveled corners is one bay in width. The one on the left has a single window on the first floor, surmounted by an apron of tiny fishscale shingles, which underscores a second story window. On the right side, the ground floor is cut away, but the apron and second story window are present.

On the northeast side of the house is a secondary entrance with a canopy. Occupying half of the rear portion of the house is a covered porch.

Inside the entrance is a spacious entry hall, with an oak stairway as its centerpiece. Doors and window frames are made of pine and are plain, in the sense that they are not carved or reeded. The first floor parlor and a bedroom on the second story have original fireplace mantels, that were purchased and installed by Marshall Field from Chicago when the home was built.

Since the house was built at a time when kitchens and bathrooms were inside the home, and it has had few owners, little has been changed.

There is one small outbuilding, the original function of which is unknown.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates c. 1900 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Combining elements of the Colonial Revival style with massing of the late Queen Anne style, the Watson House is the best example of this style in Charlestown. Contributing to its significance is the fact that it has undergone very little change since it was constructed at the turn of the century.

The house was constructed for Ward Watson, a teacher, lawyer, member of the State Senate (1895, 1897), and Judge of the Indiana Appellate Court (1907-1911). Watson was born in Corydon in 1857, and opened a law office in Charlestown in the 1880s. He married Edith Barnett in the early 1890s, and had this house built in about 1900. They lived there until her death in 1911, after which the house was locked up, remaining unoccupied until after his death in 1932.

Watson was active in Republican politics, and was one of a group of four men known as the Big Four, who wielded a powerful influence in the county. After retiring from the bench, he went into private practice in Indianapolis (Watson, Esarey & Watson). During this time, in 1917, Watson had another house built next door to this one, utilizing a ceramic tile in which he evidently had a financial interest.

Watson returned to Charlestown in about 1931, and died there in 1932. Between that time and the present, the house was owned by the Dysert family for about 20 years. The present owners purchased the house in 1956.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Baird, Capt. Lewis C., Baird's History of Clark County, Indiana. B. F. Bowen & Co., Indianapolis, 1909.
Biographical Sketches of the Members of the 16th General Assembly of the State of Indiana. M. R. Hyman Co., Indianapolis, 1897.

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than one acre

Quadrangle name Charlestown, Indiana-Kentucky

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	6	6	1	6	8	6	0	4	2	5	5	8	6	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D

Zone			Easting				Northing							

E

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H

Zone			Easting				Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification

The SE half of lot #137 of Town of Charlestown, Clark County, Indiana, such parcel being a tract 77' on Water Street and running back northwardly therefrom a distance of 100'.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	code
state		code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Bonny E. Wise, with permission of owner		
organization	Charlestown Architectural Pres. Society	date	May, 1983
street & number	673 High Street	telephone	812/256-6651
city or town	Charlestown	state	Indiana 47111

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 James M. Peterson date 7-21-83

title Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer date

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the
National Register

date 9/1/83

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
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Continuation sheet Watson House

Item number 9

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Ward H. Watson, obituary, Indianapolis Star, September 20, 1932.

Interviews with Mrs. Oneida Dysert Rich (past owner), and Mrs. Robert Coombs (present owner).

Courthouse Records