

PH 362687x

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED JUN 28 1976  
DATE ENTERED SEP 18 1976

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 J. Neely Johnson House  
AND/OR COMMON J. Neely Johnson House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 1029 F Street  
CITY, TOWN Sacramento VICINITY OF 3rd  
STATE California CODE 06 COUNTY Sacramento CODE 067

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME City of Sacramento  
STREET & NUMBER 915 I Street  
CITY, TOWN Sacramento VICINITY OF STATE California 95814

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Sacramento County Building  
STREET & NUMBER 901 G Street  
CITY, TOWN Sacramento STATE California 95814

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Sacramento Museum and History Commission survey of pre-1900 structures  
"Vanishing Victorians" publication  
DATE 1971-1973  FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Sacramento City and County Museum 1009 7th Street  
CITY, TOWN Sacramento, California STATE 95814

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This dignified early 1950's Greek Revival house, located in Sacramento's oldest extant residential district, is a monument to the fact that California's early settlers retained the basic eastern tradition of strong, simple composition with decorations based on classical sources.

Essentially, this is a two story house with a ground level basement and a shallow attic story. The first and second stories are equal in height. The house is composed of two attached rectangles, with a continuous wall on the west elevation, each with its separate low gable roof with plain boxed cornice, and eaves extending partly around the corner. The front or main block is slightly taller and longer (32'8") than the rear block (29'11").

The house is constructed of brick with the front or south side and one-half of the east side being covered with plaster. The rear of the east side is covered with horizontal wood siding; this may have once been an open two story side porch, enclosed at a later date. The foundations are of brick.

The principal feature is the elegant double open veranda located on the gable end of the building facing the street, underneath the triangular pediment. The roof of each porch is supported by four octagonal wooden columns, each raised on a base and topped with a simple capital. The columns are connected by handrails held up with crossed supports on the second story. The main entrance on the first floor is on the left, opening into a side hall. Straight cement stairs lead to the carved front door, enframed by two attached octagonal columns and surmounted by a plain lintel. The tall, narrow first floor windows reach almost the full height of the wall. In the second story a four panel french door, surmounted by a plain lintel and flanked by two windows, opens onto the spacious veranda.

The windows of the house, with the exception of those in the basement, are all two-sash, double-hung windows surrounded by a plain wood molding, uniformly distributed.

Decorative elements were used sparingly. The side walls of the main block are relieved only by full length pilasters attached at the corners. An unornamented frieze runs around the front block underneath the boxed cornice. Quoins mark three corners of the wooden portion of the rear block. Four tall brick chimneys project from the roof, two on the east side of the main block and two on the west side of the rear block.

There is a narrow, onestory addition to the east side of the house with a low gable roof, which may have been added when the house was subdivided into apartments after the 1920's. Fortunately, it is not so obtrusive as to distract from the symmetry of the whole. An early 20th century two story addition on the rear wall of the house, narrower in width than the main structure, with a shed roof and exposed stairway has been removed.

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Description

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An early alteration is the wooden wall on the eastern rear half of the house. The roof line appears to be original but the brick work of the rear of the building stops two-thirds of the way across and becomes wood siding. It is thought that an open two-story porch existed on this elevation, oriented as many southern homes are, toward the morning sun. It was probably filled in with wood afterward due to an unsympathetic climate. This alteration would have taken place after the ad-

Originally, the home stood in the center of its one-quarter block lot, surrounded by particularly rich and handsome gardens. Surviving the coming and going of several structures on the same parcel, the house again stands virtually isolated on its lots, the vacant land directly to the east being slated for a city mini-park.

In a report titled "Vanishing Victorians" compiled by the American Association of University Women, the interior is noted for its long, steep staircase with hand turned rail, brass doorknobs and recessed doorways. The main door opens into an entrance hall with the staircase on the left. The ceilings in the front block of the house are all high, being approximately 11 feet high. The parlors retain two marble fireplaces and traces of the original stencil work. Decorative plaster festoons and floral designs are applied to the upper walls and ceilings of the first floor parlor.

Presently the windows and doors are boarded up and the house is surrounded by a chain link fence. It appears to be in fairly sound condition though in need of some repair. Windows are broken, the porch has been vandalized, etc. In 1973 the upper story of the rear addition, which has since been removed, caught fire. It did not damage the rest of the house. The interior is now divided into four apartments which were rented until the early 1970's. It is located next to a proposed mini-park site planned by the Alkali Flat Neighborhood Development Program.

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input 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 **1853**

BUILDER/ARCHITECT **unknown**

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The J. Neely Johnson house is one of the few surviving residences of the early 1850's in Sacramento. It is also the only existing example of residential Greek Revival architecture in the city.

The Johnson house is significant not only for its stylistic uniqueness as a graceful Southern home in an early California frontier setting, but its prominence as a residence for several individuals of local, state and national historic importance. Two of California's first four governors lived in this residence.

Peter Burnett, the first governor of California and a state supreme court judge, lived in the house in 1853 and may have been responsible for its construction that year. Burnett was born in Tennessee and first came west to seek gold, turning to law and then to politics in the late 1840's. Elected the first governor in 1849, he resigned in 1851 to resume the practice of law. He spoke in opposition to the Vigilance Committee of 1856 and in 1857 was appointed supreme judge by Governor Johnson, who succeeded him in residing in the home.

John Neely Johnson, fourth governor of California lived in the home in 1856, just across the street from the next and fifth state governor, John B. Weller. Johnson was a pioneer gold seeker turned politician. He arrived in California in 1849 to prospect, and in rapid succession became one of the state's first census-takers by appointment of President Taylor, head of forces raised for the "Mariposa Expedition" against the Indians, city attorney and district attorney of Sacramento, assemblyman in the legislature and governor. A January 10, 1856 article in The Sacramento Union reported "On the inaugural day, the California Guard with seven other militia companies paraded to Governor-elect Johnson's home on F Street and escorted him to the Capitol for the inaugural ceremonies." Moving to Nevada soon after his term, he was subsequently elevated to the Supreme Court bench of that state. His wife was the beautiful and noted Lizzie Zabriskie, whose father, Col James Zabriskie, was a well known attorney and law writer in Sacramento and San Francisco.

David S. Terry, elected associate judge of the supreme court in a statewide upset, moved into this house as Johnson moved out. Terry, whose eastern family had a prominent Revolutionary War background, served himself as a soldier, in the Texan and Mexican Wars, the battle of Monterey, and the Civil War with the confederate army. He practiced law, became a California Supreme Court chief justice, and a political leader,



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Significance

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(continued)

involved with the Vigilance Committee. His volatile temperament involved him in numerous difficulties during his life, one of the most notorious being the duel he fought with Senator David Broderick, which resulted in the latter's death. His wife, niece of the Governor of Mississippi, was said to have wept in the parlor of this house prior to this infamous duel. Terry was lauded for his stand against early day railroad practices and his legal writing also gained note.

A private kindergarten was also conducted in the home by the Episcopal Reverend Dr. John Bonte. In 1877, Bonte served as Deputy Grand Orator of the Grand Lodge of California Masons and was also suggested for a diplomatic Mission to Japan, a national position.

Leonard Goss of the Sacramento Iron Works lived in the residence until the early 1870's, after Terry left to join the Confederate forces.

In 1873, H.C. Kirk, an established, practicing pharmacist in Sacramento since 1853, bought the house which continued as the family home for many years, even after his death in 1881.

The rich history of the neighborhood surrounding the structure highlights and emphasizes its significance. The house has acquired considerable historic value on the local, state and national level in several areas of significance. It possesses an intrinsic architectural value as a unique example of its style in Sacramento, and that style's transmittal from east to west during the Gold Rush era.