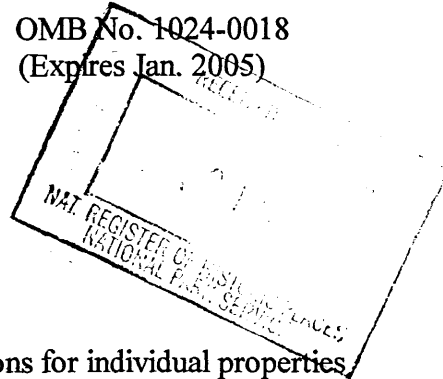


NPS Form 10-900  
(Rev. Aug. 2002)

OMB No. 1024-0018  
(Expires Jan. 2005)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

Historic name Sweat-Comings Company House

other names/site number N/A

**2. Location**

street & number 10-12 Powell Street not publication N/A  
city or town Richford vicinity N/A  
state Vermont code VT. county Franklin code 011  
zip code 05476

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant \_\_\_ nationally \_\_\_ statewide X locally. (\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Suzanne C. Jamile National Register Specialist 3-31-04  
Signature of certifying official Date





Sweat-Comings Company House  
Name of Property

Franklin County, Vermont  
County and State

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### 7. Description

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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Colonial Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

roof Asphalt

walls Wood :Weatherboard

other Wood

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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### 8. Statement of Significance

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Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- X  A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- X  C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Sweat-Comings Company House  
Name of Property

Franklin County, Vermont  
County and State

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture  
Community Planning and Development  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance 1909 – 1953

Significant Dates 1909  
1924

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)  
N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Sweat-Comings Company House  
Name of Property

Franklin County, Vermont  
County and State

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### 9. Major Bibliographical References

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(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Location of Additional Data

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other :

Name of repository: University of Vermont, Bailey-Howe Library, Special Collections; Richford Historical Society, Richford, VT.; Office of the Town Clerk, Richford, VT.

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### 10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property .10 acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	18	0683333	4984940	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

Sweat-Comings Company House  
Name of Property

Franklin County, Vermont  
County and State

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Elizabeth M. McGinnis

organization University of Vermont Historic Preservation Program date           , 2003

street & number 442 Main Street telephone 802-656-3180

city or town Burlington state Vermont zip code 05405

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**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Richford Community Housing Limited Partnership c/o Housing Vermont, Inc.

street & number 123 St. Paul Street telephone 802-863-8424

city or town Burlington state VT. zip code 05401

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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to Keeper, National Register of Historic Places, 1849 "C" Street NW, Washington, DC 20240

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

The Sweat-Comings Company House  
Franklin County, Richford, Vermont

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### Architectural Description

The Sweat-Comings Company House at 10-12 Powell Street is a two story, three-by-three bay, vernacular Colonial Revival style duplex that was built in 1909, and moved across the street to its current site in 1924. It is located on the fringe of a residential neighborhood, one-half block from Main Street in downtown Richford, Vermont. The nearly square, symmetrical, wood frame, truncated hip roof structure rests on a concrete foundation and has wood clapboard siding and an asphalt shingle roof. A narrow brick chimney rises from the east roof slope. This dwelling is a well-preserved example of an early twentieth century Colonial Revival style duplex with a significant Colonial Revival style front porch, a distinctive wall dormer, and original doors and windows. The generally intact interior retains its historic floor plan and many original finishes including wood flooring, a set of French doors, window and door trim, and cast iron heating grates. The structure retains integrity of workmanship, materials, design, feeling and association. Although the building was moved in 1924, it retains integrity of setting and location as it has remained on this site for over fifty years.

### Site

Located on the south side of Powell Street, the dwelling was previously known as 19 Powell Street, however, the address was changed to 10-12 Powell Street with the recent advent of the 911 Emergency System. Sited on a level, .10 acre parcel, with surrounding lawn and mature trees, the property is bounded by the emergency services building on the corner of Powell and Main Street on its east, other residential homes extending up Powell Street to the west, and residential homes which front on School Street to its south. Facing north, it is directly across

Powell Street from the now vacant Sweat-Comings Company complex, a former furniture factory, which is bordered to its north by the firehouse (currently the home of the Richford Historical Society) and the Missisquoi River.

When originally built in 1909, the dwelling was located across the street as part of the aforementioned Sweat-Comings Company, and used as housing for employees. It was constructed just west of the 1909 Sweat-Comings building, which fronted on Main Street and was recently demolished due to extreme deterioration. The dwelling was moved across the street to its current site in 1924, when the Sweat-Comings Company expanded.



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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

The Sweat-Comings Company House  
Franklin County, Richford, Vermont

Section number 7 Page 2

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### Exterior

The symmetrical quality of the exterior of the duplex is evident in the three-bay fenestration patterns on each elevation. Other features that further define the symmetry of the building are the twin entries centered in the front elevation, a three (front) by one (side) bay front porch, and the broad wall dormer that is centered in the front roof slope. Trim details include corner boards, double frieze boards, flat stock window and door surrounds, and a molded cornice. The historic, double hung windows found on all elevations consist of upper sash that are half the size of the lower sash; these windows have new, triple track aluminum storm windows.

On the front (north) elevation, the distinctive, one-story, hip roof, Colonial Revival style, three (front) by one (side) bay front porch that spans the façade has half-height columns that rest on a wood shingle apron with a lattice skirt across the front, and a set of wood stairs with pipe hand rails in the center bay leading to the entrances. The twin, center bay entrances serve the two apartments; the left bay entry for the first floor unit, and the right bay door for the second floor unit. The entrance doors are historic, fifteen-light, wood frame, and have new, single-light metal panel storm doors. Flanking the entry doors are wide cottage windows comprised of a large pane topped by a transom light. These windows retain their historic, wood, four-light storm windows. Three, historic, double hung, wood windows regularly spaced across the second floor are the primary window type in the building with upper sash that are half the size of the lower sash, and new, triple track aluminum storms. The gable roof wall dormer that is centered on the front elevation contains a paired louvered opening for attic ventilation.

The east side elevation has two window bays on the first floor, with a new paired casement on the left, and a historic opening with the typical one-over-one window with the shorter upper sash in the right bay. Directly above on the second floor, a historic one-over-one window is located over that of the floor below, a similar window is in the center bay, and a new, smaller one-over-one window (with equal size sash) is found in the left bay for the unit second floor kitchen.

The west elevation has three bays across the first story with the historic, double hung sash in the outer bays, and a new, smaller, one-over-one window (with equal size sash) for a bathroom in the center. Two historic windows are located on the second floor directly above those on the first floor in the outer bays.

The three-bay rear (south) elevation has a paired, historic window on the first-story center bay, and a wood panel door with new, single-light, metal storm door on the far right bay. The

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The Sweat-Comings Company House  
Franklin County, Richford, Vermont

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entrance door is sheltered by a one-bay, one-story, shed roof porch supported by square posts that rests on a concrete deck and step. The left bay contains a historic double hung window, as do the three window openings directly above on the second floor.

**Interior**

The duplex is arranged with one apartment on each floor. The extant, historic floor plan could have logically served as a rooming house with public rooms on the first floor and multiple bedrooms on the second. Local history informs us that the building was used as a boarding house for the Sweat-Comings Company employees as well as a dwelling for the Company watchman when it was located across the street between 1909 and 1924. Distinctive, historic, interior finishes include hardwood flooring, plaster walls, flat stock window and door trim, and a set of French doors in the first floor unit.

The first floor apartment is entered through the left bay front entrance door to an entry hall that has a set of multi-light French doors on the left (east) that may have formerly accessed a front parlor and now functions as a dining room. The center hall extends toward the rear of the dwelling to a living room, flanked by a kitchen on the left (east), and two bedrooms and a bathroom on the right (west).

The second floor unit is accessed by the right bay entrance door, which leads to a small entry vestibule and stairs to the upstairs apartment. Ascending the stairs, one enters a central stair hall that accesses three rooms across the rear half of the building, three rooms across the front, and a small bathroom, which now comprise a three-bedroom apartment. This second floor configuration appears to have formerly functioned as separate sleeping rooms when the dwelling was a boarding house.

A full-height basement with a poured concrete foundation is accessed by way of stairs descending from the first floor apartment's vestibule. Aside from mechanical rooms, the basement contains two designated storage areas, one for each apartment.

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The Sweat-Comings Company House  
Franklin County, Richford, Vermont

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**Statement of Significance**

The Sweat-Comings Company House is a two-story, three-by-three bay, vernacular Colonial Revival style duplex built in 1909. It functioned as a home for the watchman and boarding house for workers at the Sweat-Comings Company plant where it was originally located next to the first concrete factory building, also built in 1909. The Sweat-Comings Company House is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its reflection of early twentieth century housing trends and its response to housing needs during a period of rapid industrialism associated with the economic development at the Falls of the Missisquoi River in Richford. This was an early example of housing for workers who were either unmarried or had relocated to Richford without family in response to job availability. It is also eligible under Criterion C as an intact example of early twentieth century worker housing in Vermont. The dwelling exhibits characteristic features of early twentieth century Colonial Revival style housing including symmetrical exterior massing, a hip roof, a front porch with half columns and closed railing, and a central wall dormer. The interior retains a generally intact floor plan and original decorative features and finishes. The Sweat-Comings Company House was moved 79 years ago to its current site, across the street from its original site. Thus it meets the criteria consideration concerning the moving of the structure since it was moved more than 50 years ago, and has retained historical significance in that it continued to serve as housing. The building retains its integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association, and for the last 79 years, has retained integrity of location and setting.

A charter granted on August 21, 1780 founded the town of Richford in northern Vermont on the border with Canada. Located on the Missisquoi River, the town's growth is directly related to the waterfalls around which the first settlers built a dam, gristmill and sawmill in 1798. Hard times befell Richford in 1807 when President Thomas Jefferson imposed an embargo on trade with Canada. Natural disasters, such as floods, fires and crop disease further set back development until the first successful commercial and milling operation was established in 1824. The lifting of the trade embargo by the Reciprocity Treaty of 1854 caused the first large period of growth with the population exceeding 1300 persons in 1860. In the 1860s and 1870s two railroads were built through Richford, the Central Vermont Railroad and the Canadian Pacific Railroad. Richford had also become a major customs station at the border with Canada. By the turn of the twentieth century, the population had swelled to over 2400 residents as new manufacturing ventures attracted workers and their families. This was notably the second generation of development at the falls.

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The Sweat-Comings Company House  
Franklin County, Richford, Vermont

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One of the largest manufacturers at the turn of the twentieth century in Vermont was the Sweat-Comings Company, which started as a door and sash producer and had expanded into maple furniture manufacture, as well as the operation of a sawmill and electrical plant. The fire of August 12, 1907 consumed the entire commercial block on Main Street between Powell Street and the Missisquoi River, destroying the entire Sweat-Comings factory complex and many other buildings including the original dwelling behind the plant on Powell Street that the Sweat-Comings Company House ultimately replaced. Mr. Comings immediately rebuilt his operation with innovative concrete block construction and also rebuilt the firehouse next door that now houses the Richford Historical Society. The dwelling, of frame construction, now at 10-12 Powell Street was originally built in 1909 on the site of a previous boarding house that burned. When built in 1909, the new Sweat-Comings Company House also included an attached hip roof garage slightly set back on the west elevation of the house (now its east elevation). The building was believed to house the plant watchman and some workers in a boarding house arrangement. It served as worker housing during a period of tremendous growth in Richford, when the employment opportunities attracted workers from other areas of Vermont and other American states as well as a large influx of émigrés from Canada. Further, examining the history of the Sweat-Comings Company itself, its workforce increased when its new plant was rebuilt in 1909.

The house was moved to its current site in 1924, from across the street, to allow for construction of a large addition (the Sweat-Comings building still standing at present) to the original Sweat-Comings factory. The dwelling is now sited on land that was not previously occupied and it is contiguous with the Downtown Richford Historic District that was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980; however, since it was moved in 1924, the duplex relates more directly to the residential buildings adjacent to it than it does with the industrial building across the street associated with its early history. The garage was not moved to the same site, however, but was instead moved up the street to the intersection of Powell and Intervale, across the road from the Richford Primary School. This garage was converted to a residence and is clustered with other small residences that were also moved up the road at the same time.

A lifelong resident of Richford, Mr. William "Dig" Rowley, who was a teenager in 1924, recalls when the buildings were moved, as he was raised on School Street, one block away from Powell Street. Sweat-Comings built a second large concrete building directly behind the first, which fronted on Powell Street. A photograph (postcard view) in Mr. Rowley's possession, and also appearing in the 1987 book *Richford, Vermont: Frontier Town, the First Hundred and*

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The Sweat-Comings Company House  
Franklin County, Richford, Vermont

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*Fifty Years* by Jack C. Salisbury, is in the archives of the Historical Society as well. It shows the Sweat-Comings Company House adjacent to the first concrete Sweat-Comings Company plant, built in 1909. Sanborn Insurance maps from 1930 and 1943 show the location of 10-12 Powell Street on its present site opposite the Sweat-Comings Block.

The land on Powell Street was first owned by the Powell family, early settlers for whom the street was named. Silas Pratt Carpenter and his heirs later owned it, in the latter part of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Carpenter, born in the 1820s, was Town Clerk for thirty-three years and Town Treasurer for fifty-five years, to name only two of the dozen or so prominent civic positions that he held throughout his lifetime. Carpenter died in 1900 and the land was sold by his heirs, S. Carl and S. Ralph Carpenter. The Sweat-Comings Company House passed to private ownership when it was moved with the subsequent owners after 1924 including: G.W. Burnett, Basil Duval, Elmer Duval, Sidney and Bernice Cooke, The Home Owners Loan Corporation (under the home Owners Loan Act of 1933), Robert Duval, Ellen B. Sullivan, Harold and Helen Thompson, J. and C. Barbeau, and William and Marilyn Black. It is difficult to determine whether the owners were, in fact, residents of the dwelling or investors who may have rented the units to tenants, or a combination of the two. The house has served as a two-family dwelling in recent decades.

The vernacular architectural style of the Sweat-Comings Company House demonstrates an early use of Colonial Revival influences during the first decade of the twentieth century. These influences include the truncated hip roof with the centered, front gable wall dormer on the front roof slope; a one-story, full-width front porch; and the symmetrical three-bay fenestration patterns on all four elevations, including balanced windows and centered front doors. Trim details such as the corner boards, double frieze boards, flat stock window and door surrounds, and a molded cornice further exemplify the Colonial Revival design. The retention of the Sweat-Comings Company House's original detailing, windows, doors, clapboards, dormer, porch and interior treatments make it a true reflection of its age. The vernacular form well suited the original need for housing with simplicity of design. Innovative for its time, the Colonial Revival style was more unusual in the Richford of 1909, when the building of Queen Anne style homes was still the most popular. As cited in *A Field Guide To American Houses*, the hipped roof with full-width porch is a principal subtype and accounts for about one-third of all Colonial Revival houses built before 1915. It goes on to say that the style is sometimes called the Classic Box and was most frequently built between 1900 and 1920.

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The Sweat-Comings Company House  
Franklin County, Richford, Vermont

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The Sweat-Comings Company House is nearly square and its straightforward symmetrical fenestration is typical of the style and was in keeping with the adjacent commercial area as well as with the residential neighborhood to its west and south. However symmetrical the exterior was, it does not betray the asymmetry of the interior, thus, although achieving the objective of the style on the exterior, the house was divided on the interior in a way practical for use as a company house. That it was innovative in design is also in keeping with the innovations that the Sweat-Comings Company made in constructing their new factory and adjacent buildings out of concrete block.

The design of the Sweat-Comings Company House is somewhat unusual for its asymmetrical interior floor plan, as many duplexes, particularly with symmetrical fenestration like this one, were arranged side-by-side on the interior, with each side having a mirror image floor plan with common rooms on the first floor and bedrooms on the second. The irregular interior floor plan of this structure lends credence to the local lore, which recalls the original use as being that of a boarding house. After 1924, the house was most likely used as a two family residence or duplex, as it is today. Similar exterior house design can be found in other areas of Vermont, such as in Burlington, eighty miles southwest of Richford, where there are two duplexes on the north end of Battery Park with identical fenestration patterns, full front porches, and central wall dormers, with the only noticeable difference being a gable roof instead of a hip roof as in the Sweat-Comings Company House. The building design may have been inspired by a house pattern, enormously popular and widely distributed at the time, in addition to very accessible catalog architectural features.

Most of downtown Richford's houses are historic, built primarily during the peak period from 1900 to 1920. The subsequent population and economic decline was parallel to the decline of the railroads and the diminishment of small manufacturing. This workingman's duplex provided shelter for people who materially sustained the growth of Richford's businesses, at a time when the need for housing was most intense.

In 2002, 10-12 Powell Street was purchased by the Richford Community Housing Limited Partnership and rehabilitated under the supervision of Housing Vermont, Inc. and the Richford Renaissance Corporation to preserve the historic dwelling and to provide affordable housing in

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## **National Register of Historic Places**

### **Continuation Sheet**

The Sweat-Comings Company House  
Franklin County, Richford, Vermont

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the village. The first concrete block Sweat-Comings Company factory that stood on the corner of Powell Street and Main Street was dismantled in 2002, due to its deteriorated condition. The fate of the remaining 1909 factory building (now vacant) and the vacant lot on the corner of Main Street remains in the balance, while support for its rehabilitation is in progress, with Richford preservationists urgently seeking solutions.

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**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

The Sweat-Comings Company House  
Franklin County, Richford, Vermont

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**Bibliography**

Hemenway, Abby Maria, ed. *Vermont Historical Gazetteer: A Magazine Embracing A History of Each Town, Civil, Ecclesiastical, Biographical, and Military, Vol. II.* Burlington, VT. Miss A.M. Hemenway, 1871.

Jeffrey, William H. *Successful Vermonters: A Modern Gazetteer of Lamoille, Franklin and Grand Isle Counties Containing An Historical Review of the Several Towns.* East Burke, VT. The Historical Publishing Company, 1907.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses.* New York, N.Y.: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 2002.

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Salisbury, Jack C. *Richford, Vermont: Frontier Town, the First Hundred and Fifty Years.* Canaan, N.H.: Phoenix Publishing Company, 1987.

*Sanborn Maps of Richford, Vermont,* New York, N.Y.: Sanborn-Perris Map Co., 1892, 1897, 1904, 1909, 1920, 1930 and 1943.

Simmons, Auduria, et al. *Glimpses of Richford: 1780-1980.* Richford, VT. Richford Historical Society Bicentennial Committee, 1980.

**Interviews**

Carolyn Coons, local resident, June 12, 2003.

Mae Kittell, local resident, June 12, 2003 and July 3, 2003.

Albert Perry, local resident, July 14, 2003.

William R. Rowley, July 3, 2003 and July 9, 2003.



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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

The Sweat-Comings Company House  
Franklin County, Richford, Vermont

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### Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of 10-12 Powell Street create an approximate square defined by the frontage on Powell Street, beginning at an iron pipe marker running easterly 66.98 feet, running southerly 65.02 feet, running westerly 66.02 feet and then running northerly 65.00 feet to the point of the beginning.

The nominated property is .10 acre and the Tax Parcel I.D. is P O 0012.

Refer to Krebs and Lansing Consulting Engineers, Inc. survey completed on November 12, 2001 for the Richford Community Housing Limited Partnership.

### Verbal Boundary Justification

The land included within this boundary is the land that was historically associated with the building since 1924 and conveys the significance of the property.

**Vermont Division for Historic Preservation**

Negative Identification Form:  
Sweat-Comings Company House  
Richford, Franklin County, Vermont

<u>File #</u>	<u>June, 2003</u>	<u>Elizabeth M. McGinnis</u>		
<u>File #</u>	<u>Date Photographed</u>	<u>Photography Credit</u>		
<u>Frame #</u>	<u>Subject Identification</u>	<u>Village/Town</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Direction of View</u>
16	10-12 Powell St.	Richford	Franklin	West
17	“	“	“	“
18	“	“	“	“
19	“	“	“	Southwest
20	“	“	“	“
21	“	“	“	“
22	“	“	“	“
23	n/a			
24	10-12 Powell St.	“	“	Northeast
25	n/a			
31	10-12 Powell St.	“	“	Southeast
32	“	“	“	“
33	“	“	“	“
19	Richford Primary School	“	“	South/interior
20	10-12 Powell St.	“	“	North/postcard
21	“	“	“	“
22	“	“	“	“
17	31 Intervale Ave.	“	“	South/interior
18	10-12 Powell St.	“	“	“
19	“	“	“	West/interior
20	“	“	“	“
21	“	“	“	East/interior
22	“	“	“	North/interior