



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 an 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 Shearer and Corser Double House

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 81-83 Summer Street N/A not for publication

city or town St. Johnsbury N/A vicinity

state Vermont code VT county Caledonia code 005 zip code 05819

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
[Signature] 7/2/94
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Vermont State Historic Preservation Office
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
 entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register.
 other, (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper Edson H. Beall Entered in the National Register 9.16.94 Date of Action

Shearer and Corser Double House
Name of Property

Caledonia County, VT
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register

0

Historic & Architectural Resources of St. Johnsbury

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/school

DEFENSE/arms storage

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Italianate

Colonial Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick

walls asbestos

roof asphalt

other wood

weatherboard

Narrative Description

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

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSHEARER AND CORSER DOUBLE HOUSE
81-83 Summer St., St. Johnsbury
Caledonia County, VermontSection number 7 Page 1

The Shearer and Corser Double House, located at 81-83 Summer Street in St. Johnsbury, Vermont, is a large Italianate style, six by two bay, two story, hipped roof double house with a double decker Colonial Revival style front porch and a rear ell. Ornamenting the main block is an entablature with paired scrolled brackets and a dentil course of spaced pyramidal blocks. The centered paired entrances each have sidelights but share a molded lintel. The house, originally a school built c.1854 on Summer Street at the corner of Winter Street, was moved to its current location c.1864. The house is covered with asbestos siding, but the original window, door, and cornice trim, and the Colonial Revival style porch remain intact and the building retains its integrity of design, setting, workmanship, feeling, and association.

The rectangular main block is situated on the east side of Summer Street with the ridge of the hip roof parallel to the street. There are driveways on each side of the building. It has a brick foundation, asbestos siding, and an asphalt shingle roof with twin interior chimneys. The roof line of the end walls peaks upward slightly in middle, so the roof line and entablature are cambered. The dentil course is made up of a band of pyramidal blocks. The paired scrolled brackets with identical pyramidal blocks at their bases. Sash is two over two with heavily molded cornices and labels without the label stops.

Fronting the building is a four bay wide, double decker Colonial Revival style porch with a shed roof. The porch appears to have been added c.1910. In the middle of the roof is a shallow pediment. Both stories of the porch have clapboarded aprons, vertical beaded board paneling inside the apron walls, Tuscan colonnettes, and latticework below the porch floor. The two main entrances are located in the middle of the street facade. They each have sidelights and share a lintel with a cornice cap molding. On the second story two doors, each with a cornice, lead out to the porch.

The gable-roofed rear ell is two stories high, but is lower than the main block. Attached to the end of the ell is the one story garage, which has a shallow gable roof. The north and south ell walls are four bays long, with an entry in the end bay. On the second floor, there is no window in the second bay. The doors were added during the 1991 rehabilitation to provide a new means of egress for the first floor apartments. New doors were inserted in existing bays and the window

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

SHEARER AND CORSER DOUBLE HOUSE
81-83 Summer St., St. Johnsbury
Caledonia County, Vermont

Section number 7 Page 2

surrounds were retained.

The garage, formerly a carriage barn added in the 1870s, has openings for two cars on both the south and north walls. These openings are located in hip-roofed projections that probably were added c.1924 when the carriage barn was converted to a garage. The doors are modern paneled garage doors with panes of glass at eye level. On the back of the garage is a wooden exterior stair that provides a second means of egress from the second floor of the building.

Interior

The interior finish is similar in both two story dwelling units of identical plan. The entry halls feature staircases with a natural finish. Staircases have heavy chamfered newel posts. Pyramidal blocks in the capital portion of the newel are similar to those on the exterior eaves detail. The balusters are heavily turned. Baseboards have cap moldings. The front door to the hall has a large rectangular pane of glass accented by perimeter muntins. The four panel doors are painted and have heavy, bolection molding surrounds. Some of the kitchens and bathrooms have wainscoting, but they have been much modernized.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- 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.
- 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.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or 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.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

c. 1880

Significant Dates

c. 1880

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Shearer and Corser Double House
Name of Property

Caledonia County, VT
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property less than 1 acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	8
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7	3	7	1	9	0
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Zone Easting Northing

3

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Zone Easting Northing

2

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4

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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.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

organization _____ date 5/1994

street & number 135 State Street, Drawer 33 telephone (802) 828-3226

city or town Montpelier state VT zip code 05633-1201

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)

Property Owner

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

name St. Johnsbury Housing Partnership

street & number 20 Main Street telephone (802) 748-5101

city or town St. Johnsbury state VT zip code 05819

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.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including 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 the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSHEARER AND CORSER DOUBLE HOUSE
81-83 Summer St., St. Johnsbury
Caledonia County, VermontSection number 8 Page 1

The Italianate style, two story, hip-roofed Shearer and Corser Double House, at 83 Summer Street, is architecturally significant as an example of multi-family housing in St. Johnsbury, Vermont. As was common in St. Johnsbury for such housing, the building has had a colorful evolutionary history. Built c.1854 as a school further down the street, it was moved c.1864 to this site where it was used as an armory until 1870. It then appears to have been a single family house until c.1880, when it was converted to a double house. Although now covered with asbestos siding, it clearly retains its double house appearance. Important features include the double door entry, heavy molded window surrounds, entablature with paired scrolled brackets and a dentil course with pyramidal blocks, and a double decker Colonial Revival style front porch. The house is being nominated under the multiple property submission, The Historic and Architectural Resources of St. Johnsbury, Vermont, and clearly meets the registration requirements for the multi-family housing property type.

The Shearer and Corser Double House began its life c.1854 as a school located at the corner of Summer and Winter streets (the current site of the 1956 Adams School). It was a two story, wood building measuring 48' x 60' and was replaced in 1864 by the brick Summer Street School (#77 in Main Street Historic District, entered on the National Register 5/28/1975), which was built across the street. This building was then moved to its current location and was converted into an armory. St. Johnsbury land records indicate that the town selectmen conveyed the armory building and the southern part of the lot in January 1870 to Franklin Fairbanks, a son of Gov. Erastus Fairbanks and a partner in the firm of E. & T. Fairbanks and Company Scale Works, the area's largest employer. The Fairbanks family were the original developers of the street and placed building setback restrictions of 30 feet in early deeds, an important factor in creating a pleasant residential character for the street.

The 1875 Beers map shows O. T. Brown at this location (perhaps as the tenant). In 1878 Fairbanks sold the premises to LeRoy Shearer and Brackett Corser. By the time of a tax sale in 1883, the building had been converted to a double house. It is not known from whence the Italianate style features date. Fairbanks and his brothers had houses built in the 1850s through 1870s that are Italianate in style and derived from Calvert Vaux's Villas and Cottages (1857). It may be more likely that these features were added c.1880 by Shearer and

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**SHEARER AND CORSER DOUBLE HOUSE
81-83 Summer St., St. Johnsbury
Caledonia County, VermontSection number 8 Page 2

Corser, since the newel posts in the main stairways have the same pyramidal-shaped blocks as those in the entablature under the hip roof. The entablature, heavy window moldings that have labels without the label stop, and paired front doors, each with their own sidelights but a shared lintel, give this rectangular, hip-roofed house a distinctive appearance.

The house ownership pattern varied throughout the years from absentee landlord ownership to separate owner/occupants of each half. By 1883 Henry Belden, an employee at Fairbanks Scale, had purchased the whole house, selling it to Aurora Davis in 1884. Davis owned it until her death in 1911. It is possible that she or the next owner added the double decker, four bay wide, Colonial Revival style porch with its Tuscan colonnettes. This porch has features that are similar to the porches that were added about the same time to the houses at 52, 53, 75, and 80 Summer Street. Davis's daughter then sold it to Myron Simpson, a truckman with a house at 76 Portland Street, St. Johnsbury. According to the 1917 St. Johnsbury directory, Claude B. Somers, a Fairbanks employee, lived here (the street address at that time was 59 Summer), thus indicating that Somers was an absentee owner. In another long period of ownership, Adelard Roy owned the building from 1931 to 1952. The Bennetts were the last long term owners of the double house, holding it from 1952 to 1977.

After 1977 it had a long series of short term owners. The building was purchased in August 1990 by the St. Johnsbury Housing Partnership, which did a substantial rehabilitation of the building using the investment tax credit program.

The Shearer and Corser Double House is located in the area known as "The Plain" on a street that began developing c.1840 as a middle and upper middle class residential neighborhood. It was a common practice for many single family homes to have lodgers or boarders, and such houses often were converted in the late 19th and early 20th century into apartments or other multi-family housing. This house, although not typical in that it was used first as a school and then an armory, fits into the pattern in the late 1800s to multi-family housing. The building clearly reflects its historic (and current) usage as multi-family housing with its double entries and double decker porch. Although the wide asbestos siding has somewhat altered the sense of proportion of the walls, the building retains many fine Italianate style details (as enumerated above) and also has a significant Colonial Revival style double decker front porch.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

SHEARER AND CORSER DOUBLE HOUSE
81-83 Summer St., St. Johnsbury
Caledonia County, Vermont

Section number 9 Page 1

9. SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Noble, Deborah. "National Register of Historic Places
Nomination Form for Summer Street Historic District."
typescript, prepared November 1991. Copy on file at
Vermont Division for Historic Preservation, Montpelier,
Vt.

Vermont Division for Historic Preservation. Historic Sites and
Structures Survey for St. Johnsbury, Vermont. On file at
VDHP office, Montpelier, Vt.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description: This .23 acre property is located
at 83 Summer Street in St. Johnsbury. The lot is 100' by 100'
and is St. Johnsbury tax lot 51 on tax map 23.

Boundary Justification: The lot includes all the property
historically associated with the building since 1870.