

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED JUL 10 1979
DATE ENTERED SEP 10 1979

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

David Mathews House

AND/OR COMMON

State Line House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

VT 67

CITY, TOWN

Bennington
Shaftsbury/Hoosick

---NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

--- VICINITY OF

Vermont/ 29th

STATE

Vermont/New York

CODE

50/31

COUNTY

Bennington/Rensselaer 003/083

CODE

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Dr. William J. Burnham

STREET & NUMBER

Ridge Dale Farm

CITY, TOWN

Shaftsbury

--- VICINITY OF

STATE

Vermont

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Shaftsbury Town Clerk's Office

STREET & NUMBER

Route 7

CITY, TOWN

S. Shaftsbury

STATE

Vermont

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Vermont Historic Sites & Structures Survey

DATE

1974

---FEDERAL STATE ---COUNTY ---LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

CITY, TOWN

Montpelier

STATE

Vermont

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 type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The State Line House, located on the north side of VT 67 and NY 67, is situated so that the border between Vermont and New York runs through the building. It is an imposing Federal style house, constructed of brick. The site slopes down to the south so that the south side of the house, now the front but originally the back, is three stories; the present rear (north) side is two stories. The roof is gabled and contains two interior end chimneys, both on the west end.

The principal facade is that on the north side. It is five bays, with central entrances at both floor levels (the porches to these doors have been removed). The entries are very similar in detailing: a central door topped with a semicircular fanlight, all within an arched wooden surround with keystone. The reveal is panelled, and the spring line of the fanlight arch is defined by a cyma recta molding. Above the fanlight is a brick semicircular arch.

On each side of the door and separated from it by the length of one stretcher is a 3/4-length sidelight, each containing a 2/2 window. These are topped by splayed brick flat arches whose tops align with the top of the semicircular arch over the door.

The other eight windows on this elevation are each 2/2, with wooden sills, molded surrounds, and splayed brick flat arches.

The north elevation, intended originally as the most formal side of the house, rests on a coursed ashlar marble foundation. This changes to coursed marble rubble on the gable ends, and diminishes in height with the slope of the land to the south.

The front (south) elevation is similar to the north, with the addition of an exposed brick basement on a coursed marble rubble foundation. This facade is also five bays, with central entries on each of the three floor levels. The basement doorway is relatively plain, in a rectangular surround under a flat arch. Narrow 1/1 sidelights are again detached from the entry the length of one stretcher and have flat arches. Fenestration on this level is confined to one window on each side of the door, located centrally in the space between the entry and the corner of the building.

On the upper two floor levels the fenestration and detailing are the same as on the north facade, with an entry with sidelights in the central bay, and two 2/2 windows to each side.

The eastern gable end contains a plain door at the basement level, two 2/2 windows on the first floor, and two more directly above. In addition, there is a smaller 2/2 window at the second floor level, and two small windows in the gable peak.

The western gable end has been substantially obscured by a 1½-story modern frame addition. Upper-story fenestration is the same as on the eastern end.

The two most outstanding features of the exterior are its patterned brick bonding, and the full Doric frieze and cornice.

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The walls are laid in a modified Flemish bond, producing opposed vertical zigzags of stretchers. The zigzags repeat every ten courses vertically, and adjacent units of the pattern touch but do not intersect; thus it is not a true diaper. Three types of coursing are used: standard Flemish bond; two stretchers followed by five headers; and three headers, one stretcher, two headers, and one stretcher. Patterned brickwork is relatively rare in Vermont; less than ten other examples are known. This house is unique, however, in that the pattern is executed in stretchers rather than plain or vitrified headers. (Compare with the Martin Chittenden House, Jericho, Chittenden County, VT, entered on the National Register on January 9, 1978.) The pattern is incorporated into all portions of the wall above the foundation, with the exception of the triangular areas in the gable ends, above the level of the cornice. There are indications the roof was originally hipped, and while the brick used in these gable ends is of the same color as the rest, it is laid in an irregular six-course American bond.

The other outstanding exterior feature is the full Doric frieze and cornice. This completely circles the roof at its edges and returns slightly at the gable ends, giving the house a more urban appearance than the typical rural Vermont dwelling.

A vernacular adaptation of the classical detailing is employed in the raking eaves of the gable ends. These raking elements include the full frieze, complete with triglyphs, taenia, crude regula, and guttae; of necessity, to accommodate the slope of the roof, the triglyphs have been divided into thirds (each with two guttae) and staggered along the frieze. It is uncommon to see a full frieze on the raking edge of a high-style building, and its application here displays a well-intentioned use of the classical idiom, even though it is not completely understood by the builder. These "raking friezes", of course, were added at the time the roof was changed from hipped to gabled.

The interior of the house retains many original details, including panelled wainscoting, panelled splayed window reveals, molded and sawn mantelpieces, and panel doors with molded surrounds and HL hinges. The northeast fireplace has a marble surround and hearth. The main staircase has a simple square newel and three angled balusters per step. The step ends have a sawn curved motif and wide panelling below. The nails used to attach the wood trim in the house are an early parallelogram-section cut nail, possibly from the local White Creek Nail Factory.

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 type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES c.1800

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Although numerous historical legends are associated with the State Line House, its primary significance lies in its design and construction. It represents, in vernacular fashion, the high-style intentions of its builder, although the handling of some details reveals a refreshing, slightly skewed interpretation of the sophisticated design norms of the period.

The house was built for David Mathews, probably around 1800. Mathews (1749-1811) was an American Soldier during the Revolutionary War. (He has been erroneously described as a Tory and a colonel.) The house was built as a residence after the war ended, and became a tavern after Mathew's death. One of the legends concerning its placement on the state line concerns judicial procedures, as it was said that a judge sitting on the New York side could not convict a defendant on the Vermont side. Another legend involves the theft of £ 3,000 in gold by Mathews from Colonel Baume of the British army and its burial in the basement of the house. This, like other stories relating to the house's role in the Revolution is doubtful due to the unlikelihood that the building existed during that period.

These legends have tended to obscure the fact that the house is an excellent, largely intact example of rural Federal architecture, particularly unusual for its four identical handsome entries. Its brickwork may be unique in the state by its incorporation of a non-intersecting pattern formed by stretchers; patterned brickwork is not commonly found in Vermont.

The full Doric frieze and cornice crowning the building lend an opulence to the house which is not frequently seen in rural Vermont architecture. However, when closely examined this detail is handled in a vernacular fashion along the raking eaves. The frieze as well as the cornice rakes, necessitating the distortion, in some form, of the triglyphs. (In high-style buildings this problem is avoided by the elimination of the raking frieze.) The resulting dilemma is handled in a straight-forward, pragmatic fashion, by splitting the triglyph in thirds, although the visual effect is markedly different from its classical antecedents.

The visual character of the house has been diminished by the addition of a 20th century frame wing on the west gable (New York) end, although it could be readily removed. It was used in the recent past as a discotheque/bar, whose attractiveness in the days of differing drinking ages was no doubt enhanced by its proximity to the state line.

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The Mathews House thus stands as a highly intact (interior and exterior) example of Federal architecture, displaying the style-conscious desires of its builder. It is visually dominant due to its large size, and clearly shows the country builder's hand on the interior as well as exterior, and has not suffered the fate of many of Vermont's buildings by being altered and added to until the original building (in many cases) loses its significance. The house is something of a local landmark due to its location, its massing, and the numerous legends which have survived about it.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Spargo, John. The True Story of Captain David Mathews and His State Line House, Rutland: The Tory Press, 1930.
Geneological file on David Mathews in Bennington Museum, Bennington, VT
Day Papers, Bennington Museum Collection

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2
UTM REFERENCES

Quad: Hoosick Falls, NY-VT
Scale: 1:24000

A | 1, 8 | | 6, 4, 0 | 7, 8, 0 | | 4, 7, 5, 5 | 4, 7, 0 |
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
C | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

B | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
D | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property is bounded by the edges of rights-of-way closest to the State Line House of the following roads on the south, VT and NY 67; on the east and north, the Shaftsbury town road known as the Old Coach Road. The western boundary is a line running generally north from a point on the northern edge of the right-of-way of NY 67 and 100 yards west of the State Line, to its intersection with the southern edge of the right-of-way of the Old Coach Road.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
Vermont	50	Bennington	003
New York	31	Rensselaer	083

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

John Dumville, Charles Ashton, & Peter Jensen

ORGANIZATION

Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

DATE

7/78-1/79

STREET & NUMBER

Pavilion Building

TELEPHONE

802-828-3226

CITY OR TOWN

Montpelier

STATE

Vermont

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

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

7-2-79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

9-10-79

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

AGREEMENT OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

DATE

9-10-79

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER