

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## 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 Ferguson, Benjamin, House

and/or common

### 2. Location

street & number	673 High Street			N/A not for publication			
city, town	Charlestown		N/A vicinity of	congressional district			
state	Indiana	code	018	county	Clark	code	019

### 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
X building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> park
site	Public Acquisition		<input type="checkbox"/> educational
object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
		<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
	N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> other:

### 4. Owner of Property

name	W. Robert & Bonny Wise		
street & number	673 High Street		
city, town	Charlestown	N/A vicinity of	state Indiana 47111

### 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.	Clark County Courthouse, County Recorder's Office		
street & number	Court Avenue		
city, town	Jeffersonville	state Indiana	47130

### 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Indiana Historic Sites  
title and Structures Inventory 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

city, town Indianapolis state Indiana

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<b>Check one</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<b>Check one</b>	<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	N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed					

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

The Ferguson House is a simple Federal style structure with a pitched roof. The original two-story house is made of brick laid in common bond, and was built with an outside kitchen. Soon after construction, a single story brick wing was added to the northeast end. New owners in the 1860's added two frame additions to the rear.

The windows contain most of the original panes and are either six over six, or nine over six. The main, southeast facade has three bays on the original house, with the eastern-most being an entrance; all have flat radiating arches. The one-story addition has two bays. The front door is not original, but the four-pane transom is original and is of pegged construction, as are the door shutters.

The interior has ten-foot ceilings and deep baseboards. Three rooms contain the original Federal style fireplace mantels. The two-run staircase has poplar posts and balustrade, while the treads are blue ash, all pegged.

The second story retains its original wide board poplar floors, while the first story floors have been overlaid with oak parquet. Some of the original, two-piece chair rail remains in the upper and lower hallway.

Built-in cupboard space is plentiful: the bedroom has a wardrobe, the living room a window seat, the stairhall a large closet, the dining room a floor-to-ceiling pantry, and the parlor has deep cupboards on either side of the fireplace.

According to a 1911 Sanborn insurance map, there were a total of seven structures on the lot; now there are two. Immediately behind the house is a story-and-a-half shed that has a fruit cellar with a plaster floor. In one part of the shed is a large fireplace that was meant to receive large cauldrons used to wash clothing.

The original well is still on the lot and has a hand-hewn limestone cover. There is also a large brick patio in a herringbone pattern, as well as a walkway that goes most of the length of the lot.

## 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation				
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)				

Specific dates 1816

Builder/Architect Benjamin Ferguson, Builder

### Statement of Significance (MAXIMUM 250 WORDS)

The Benjamin Ferguson House is significant as one of the community's best remaining structures from its earliest period, and because it was built by someone who became a prominent leader in the community.

Ferguson came to Charlestown from Virginia and immediately purchased land in Clark County. He purchased lot number 27 from James McCampbell in 1815 for \$100. The house was probably finished by the time he married Sarah Hay in April of 1816. Ferguson was elected to the first Indiana House of Representatives in 1816, the year Indiana was admitted to the Union, and continued to serve almost every year until 1833. His range of activities eventually included the Board of Directors for the Clark County Seminary; the second Postmaster of Charlestown; a lawyer and associate Circuit Court judge; and Master of the Blazing Star Masonic Lodge.

Ferguson and his wife stayed in this house only a short time, however, selling the house and lot in 1818 to Joseph Barbaroux for \$2500. Barbaroux, in turn, sold it in 1819, and the deed stated "...lot #27 containing 80 feet in front and 200 in back on which lot of ground a brick house and kitchen are erected thereon. The said was conveyed to me by Benjamin Ferguson and Sarah, his wife." The house changed owners frequently until 1860, when a young German immigrant named John George Spreisterbach purchased it. Spreisterbach and his son, Louis, were blacksmiths, the son later becoming a lawyer and judge and, in 1904, Charlestown's first mayor.

The house was a rental property for 20 years, before being purchased by its present owners in 1980.

According to Dana's Geographical Sketches on the Western Country, 1819, Charlestown had about 160 houses, chiefly of brick. Today, there are but a handful from this early period, of which the Ferguson house is one of the best preserved.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

1. History of the Ohio Falls & Their Counties, L.A. Williams & Co. 1882 Vol. II [5. County]
2. A Biographical Directory of the Indiana General Assembly, Vol. 1, 1816-1899 Courthouse
3. Baird's History of Clark Co., Indiana, 1909 [6. Early
4. Biographical & Historical Souvenir for the Counties of Clark, etc., 1899 Newspapers

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property Less than one

Quadrangle name Charlestown

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A	1 6	6 1 6 7 2 0	4 2 5 5 3 8 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C			
E			
G			

B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D			
F			
H			

**Verbal boundary description and justification** The whole of lot #27 as known and designated on the map or plan of the town of Charlestown, Clark County, Indiana, and fronting 80' on High Street, and running back the same width 200' to an alley

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

state	N/A	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Bonny Ellen Wise
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organization	date	January 4, 1983
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street & number	673 High Street	telephone	812/256-6651
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city or town	Charlestown	state	Indiana 47111
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## 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.

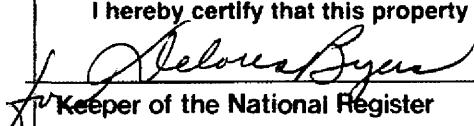
State Historic Preservation Officer signature



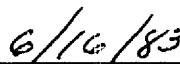
title	Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer	date	April 21, 1983
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For NPS use only

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

Entered in the  
National Register

date

  
6/16/83

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration