

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

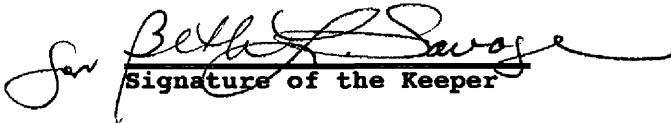
SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 91001675 Date Listed: 11/21/91

Smith, Simeon, Mansion Rutland VT
Property Name County State

N/A
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.


Signature of the Keeper

11-21-91
Date of Action

=====

Amended Items in Nomination:

3. Classification: Number of Resources within Property

The wellhouse is a contributing structure, not a building: the number of contributing building(s) is 2 and the number of contributing structure(s) is 1.

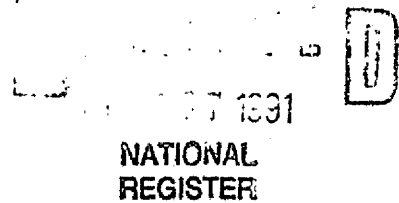
This information was discussed with Elsa Gilbertson, VTSHPO, by telephone.

DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without attachment)

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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name SMITH, SIMEON, MANSION
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Smith (or Doran) Road N/A not for publication
city, town West Haven N/A vicinity
state Vermont code VT county Rutland code 021 zip code N/A

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	3	1 buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district		_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site		_____ structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure		_____ objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	3	1 Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.
Signature of certifying official: [Signature] Date: 9/26/91
Vermont State Historic Preservation Officer

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official: _____ Date: _____
State or Federal agency and bureau: _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this 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: [Signature] Date of Action: 11-21-91

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic - single dwelling

Domestic - secondary structure

Agriculture - agricultural

outbuilding

Agriculture - agricultural field

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic - single dwelling

Domestic - secondary structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Federal

Colonial Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone

walls weatherboard

roof slate

other brick

concrete

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Entire text appears on continuation sheets.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
Architecture

Period of Significance
c. 1789-1940

Significant Dates
1876

1937

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person

Architect/Builder

Sprats, William
Webber, Payson R.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Entire text appears on continuation sheets.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Entire text appears on continuation sheets.

See continuation sheet

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

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 108

UTM References

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

B	1, 8	6, 3, 7, 0, 1, 0	4, 8, 3, 1, 7, 4, 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D	1, 8	6, 3, 6, 7, 4, 0	4, 8, 3, 2, 8, 8, 0

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Hugh H. Henry, Historic Preservation Consultant
 organization N/A date December 1990
 street & number Green Mountain Turnpike telephone 802-875-3379
 city or town Chester state Vermont zip code 05143-
9418

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Surrounded by former agricultural land on undulating terrain in rural West Haven township, the Simeon Smith Mansion property includes the c. 1789 house, a c. 1840 barn, and a c. 1940 garage and contemporary wellhouse. The house consists of a two-and-one-half-story, five-by-four-bay, vernacular Federal style main block with partial high-style interior decoration and a one-and-one-half-story, three-by-three-bay rear ell. The house possesses wide horizontal board cladding and slate-shingled gable roofs, the main roof being surmounted by two large interior end fireplace chimneys. The house's present appearance dates from an extensive rehabilitation in 1937 when it was rescued from deteriorating condition. The most visible change made at that time was the addition of the full-length Colonial Revival monumental portico; the rear ell was also built then to replace a deteriorated counterpart. The one-and-one-half-story, three-bay, vertical-boarded, gable-roofed English barn was moved a short distance during the 1937 project but preserves its historic character, including polychromatic slate roof shingles dated 1876. The property retains overall integrity regarding location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association attained during the course of its existence prior to 1940.

The Simeon Smith Mansion property is located in the rural southeast part of West Haven township near the boundary of the adjoining town of Fair Haven. The paved West Haven Road extends in an east-west direction along the north edge of the property a quarter-mile west of its intersection with Vermont Route 22A. Intersecting perpendicularly the West Haven Road, the narrow gravel Smith (or Doran) Road leads southward to the Simeon Smith Mansion, and continues a half-mile southwestward to another residence.

The Simeon Smith Mansion stands on the west side of the road, set back somewhat and approached by a gravel driveway that curves past its main (east) facade before rejoining the road. The garage stands next to the north grounds of the house and closer to the same side of the road. The wellhouse is placed directly across the road from the house, possibly on the site of an historic well.

Representing the agricultural enterprise that occurred on this property during the nineteenth century, the barn now stands apart from the other buildings. It was originally situated near the southwest rear corner of the house, oriented parallel to the

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road. During the 1937 rehabilitation project, the barn was moved a short distance across the road to the southeast of the house, and there turned perpendicular to the road.

The grounds of the house are landscaped informally with a variety of deciduous shrubs and trees. Dominating both the grounds and house, mature black locust trees stand regularly spaced in a curved line along the front (east) grounds and more irregularly along the south grounds. The size of these trees indicates that most may have been planted contemporary to the construction of the house while others farther from the house on the south grounds have sprung from the roots of the original trees. The rear (west) grounds are shaded by a line of mature deciduous trees planted probably about the time of the rehabilitation project. Clumps of honeysuckle flank the south corners of the main block and the west corners of the ell. An irregular line of medium-sized white pines bounds the north grounds behind the garage.

Beyond the immediate grounds, flat open fields surround the house and garage, defined by hedgerows around their perimeters. These fields have been mowed for hay by local farmers in recent decades. A line of deciduous trees flanks each side of the road northward from the house to the West Haven Road; the sugar maple trees along the east side were planted contemporary to the 1937 rehabilitation project. An abandoned paved tennis court dating probably from c. 1970 lies a short distance south of the house next to a copse of trees. West of the house, a large excavation made in the field probably during the 1960s was intended to become a pond but the water supply proved insufficient and it remains mostly empty.

The barn marks the south edge of the field along the east side of the road. South of the barn, a small brook flows along a swale perpendicular to the road and mostly overgrown with brush and trees. Farther south, another open field lies in an undulating and partly forested area leading to the reservoir behind the Carver Falls dam on the Poultney River.

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Simeon Smith Mansion; c. 1789, rehabilitated 1937

The imposing house consists of the original main block and a rear (west) ell that was added during the 1937 rehabilitation. Oriented parallel to the road, the main block rises two and one-half stories to a gable roof. The gable-roofed ell is attached flush with the main block's north gable facade, and rises one and one-half stories above a partly exposed basement. A one-story, shed-roofed entrance vestibule projects from the ell's north eaves facade, abutted on the west side by a lower counterpart for a basement entrance.

The main block of rectangular plan rests on a mortared rubble foundation, its exterior dimensions being 52.5 (north-south) by 36.5 (east-west) feet. Its post-and-beam frame is sheathed with vertical planks beneath the exterior siding of lapped horizontal boards with an exposure of about eleven inches; the latter were partly replaced in kind during the 1937 rehabilitation. The gable roof is shingled with slate; the publicly visible front (east) slope is distinguished by slate of reddish color while the rear (west) slope has slate of blue-grey color. Rebuilt during the 1937 project, a large interior brick chimney with a corbeled cap rises from each (north and south) end of the front slope. The ridge is covered with a rounded copper cap.

The five-bay main (east) eaves facade is arranged symmetrically around the central entrance. The door with six raised panels was installed during the 1937 rehabilitation. It is enframed by a molded and crossetted architrave surround with notched corner beading, and flanked by half-length, vertical six-over-six sidelights with molded surrounds. (The crossetted door surround may have been added c. 1800 by William Sprats when he partly remodeled the interior of the house.) The heads of the sidelights exceed the height of the door surround, corresponding to the first-story window openings. The paired side bays are occupied by twelve-over-twelve sash installed during the 1937 project (plus modern metal storm sash), and are enframed by molded surrounds. The corners of the house are defined by narrow vertical boards abutting a plain corner beading.

Dominating the main facade, a full-length, five-bay, Colonial Revival monumental portico was added to the house during the 1937 project. Its Tuscan columns are arranged symmetrically with two pairs and an intermediate single column on each half of the

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facade. The columns stand on a low concrete deck paved with blue-grey slate, and support a simple entablature along the horizontal eaves. Sheathed with sheet copper, the portico roof curves upward to merge into the original straight line of the main roof slope. The horizontal entablature returns above the end bays of the portico, but only a cornice molding ascends the closely cropped raking eaves. Short returns of that cornice at the rear (west) corners of the roof indicate the treatment at the front corners prior to the addition of the portico.

The four-bay north and south gable facades share virtually identical appearance. The main stories are punctuated by three bays of window openings treated like those on the front facade. The position of an east-of-center fourth bay is blank, reflecting the presence of the interior fireplace chimney. The attic half-story differs by having two central bays of reduced six-over-six sash with molded surrounds and two side bays of smaller four-light fixed sash also with molded surrounds. A rectangular louvered ventilator occupies the gable peak. The slightly lower grade next to the south facade permits the installation of horizontal four-light fixed sash in the foundation, aligned with the main-story side bays.

The rear (west) eaves facade presents an asymmetrical five-bay arrangement that includes an off-central entrance. The latter is fitted with a twenty-one-light door installed during the 1937 project; its molded and shouldered surround matches that of the front entrance. On each side of the entrance, a small window opening contains a six-over-six sash with a molded surround. The two right bays on the first story together with most of the second-story openings contain full-size, twelve-over-twelve sash like those on the other facades.

The rear ell appears similar to the main block at reduced scale. It extends 27 (east-west) by 17 (north-south) feet, resting on a mortared rubble foundation that reaches a half-story in height on the rear (west) facade owing to the lower level of the ground. The ell is sheathed with lapped horizontal boards matching those on the main block. Its roof is shingled with blue-grey slate like the rear slope of the main roof. A simple stepped cornice made of dimension stock follows the eaves, with short returns on the west gable facade.

The ell's two-bay north eaves facade is interrupted by the entrance vestibules. Projecting from the left half of this

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facade, the first-story vestibule is entered by a four-light-over-three-panel door flanked by six-over-six sash above an apron of vertical beadboard. A simple stepped cornice follows the eaves with short returns on the east and west sides. The abutting basement vestibule is also sheathed with vertical beadboard, but its plain eaves and the shadow of a former bulkhead door on the ell's foundation indicate that it has been added since the first-story vestibule was built.

The rear (west) gable facade is punctuated by two bays fitted with different sash on each story. The basement half-story is lighted by eight-over-eight sash, the first story by eight-over-twelves, and the second by six-over-sixes of reduced size. The corner boards are beaded in the manner of those on the main block.

The two-bay south eaves facade is distinguished by a broad semielliptical-arched alcove on the right half. The opening has been enclosed with a modern sliding glass door, flanked by original half-length, four-pane sidelights with curved top lights under the intrados of the arch. Smooth pilasters enframe the alcove and support the molded, beaded, and keystone surround of the arch. An eight-over-twelve sash lights the left half of this facade above an horizontal four-over-four sash in the foundation. At the kneewall level, an horizontal eight-light hinged sash is centered above each first-story opening.

The alcove opens onto a broad terrace that extends along the perpendicular west facade of the main block. The terrace is paved with large slabs of blue-grey and reddish slate, and bounded along the west edge by a low retaining wall built of mortared fieldstone. The terrace was constructed presumably during the renovation of the house.

The appearance of the house prior to the 1937 rehabilitation is shown in a series of photographs taken during the initial stage of that project. The main block was then deteriorating, and an off-central rear (west) ell was in worse condition. The ell was removed at the onset of the work, and the west wall of the main block was subsequently rebuilt in an altered arrangement. The present ell was constructed as a similar replacement, shifted eastward to a position flush with the main block's north facade.

The house's main (east) facade differed most notably from its present appearance by the lack of a porch. The front slope

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of the main roof concluded at a slightly projecting horizontal eaves with a cornice molding. The window openings were fitted with two-over-two (on the first story) and six-over-six sash.

The north gable facade lacked a window opening in the right-center bay of the second story. Directly above, an interior brick chimney with a corbeled cap surmounted the raking eaves of the rear roof slope; a somewhat reduced version of the adjacent chimney on the front roof slope, this chimney probably vented a fireplace (also removed) against the north wall of the second-story northwest room. A small four-pane sash lighted the gable peak. A short cornice return marked the lower front corner of the roof while the opposite (rear) corner lacked that feature.

The south gable facade nearly repeated the appearance of its north counterpart. However, it possessed both the interior brick chimney with a corbeled cap on the rear roof slope and a full-size window opening in the vertically aligned second-story bay; the latter indicates that a fireplace was not present in the second-story southwest room. The first-story, right-corner window was fitted with a six-over-six sash to match the front-facade windows of the parlor.

The rear (west) eaves facade displayed an irregular arrangement markedly different from its present one. An entrance with a paneled door occupied the first-story, left-corner bay below a second-story window with a twelve-over-twelve sash. Next to the north side of the previous ell, vertically offset and reduced six-over-six sash lighted each story. Next to the south side of that ell, the vertically offset right-corner bays were fitted with twelve-over-twelve sash. The horizontal board sheathing of this facade was hung with a narrower exposure than that on the three publicly visible facades.

The previous one-and-one-half-story shed ell was sheathed with severely weathered clapboards. An interior brick chimney with a corbeled cap straddled the ridge of its gable roof. The three-bay south eaves facade was entered on the left half by a broad trabeated carriage bay. Its right half was lighted by two bays of twelve-over-eight sash; above the right-corner bay, an eight-light fixed sash punctuated the kneewall.

The interior of the house's main block is arranged on a Georgian plan that has been slightly modified although the four corner rooms remain on each floor. The first story is bisected by a

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broad central hall that extends the full east-west depth of the main block. (Prior to the 1937 project, a bathroom existed at the rear of the hall; it was replaced by a secondary entrance that balances the front entrance.) The hall lacks the typical stair to the second floor; if a stair originally existed in the hall, it was removed before the 1937 project. The present stair occupies a fully partitioned, closed well between the hall and the northwest rear room (the modern kitchen), ascending toward the center of the building. A secondary stair existed in the corresponding position on the southwest side of the hall until its removal during the 1937 project.

On the second floor, a bathroom and adjoining sauna have been installed at the rear of the hall. The front part of the hall was partly enclosed on each side during the 1937 project to provide closets for the adjoining (northeast and southeast) bedrooms. Similar to that on the exterior of the ell, a paneled semielliptical arch was installed at the head of the resulting alcove centered on the hall window.

The central hall displays finish materials common to the formal front rooms on the first story. The walls and ceiling are plastered while the floor is laid with narrow matched hardwood boards dating probably from the 1937 rehabilitation. The woodwork consists of a molded baseboard, molded and beaded chair rail, molded door and window surrounds, and a heavy molded ceiling cornice; it is not known what woodwork existed prior to 1937.

Entered from the right side of the hall, the northeast dining room exhibits the most elaborate decoration in the house. Its high-style features were apparently designed by William Sprats, and installed by him (or another master joiner following his plan) during a remodeling in the late 1790s or early 1800s. One feature - an enriched ceiling cornice - distinguishes this room from the remainder of the house, and matches the treatment in other houses designed by Sprats.

Encircling both the room and the chimney breast engaged to its north wall, the molded cornice is embellished with dentils and carved modillions. The cornice surmounts the surrounds of the windows that incorporate a cyma reversa molding and corner beading. Below the window sills, wood panels extend downward to an ovolo-molded and beaded chair rail that provides an intermediate horizontal articulation of the wall surfaces above

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the molded baseboard. Pegged doors with four raised panels occupy the door openings, enframed by molded surrounds.

The fireplace and projecting chimney breast constitute the stylistic focus of the room. The rebuilt (1937) brick firebox with slate facing and hearth is flanked by tapered, fluted Doric pilasters with base and capital. The latter support a mantel entablature enriched with mutules, triglyphs, metopes, and guttae. The overmantel consists of a large rectangular panel with an ovolo-molded architrave surround crossetted at the four corners. A cupboard with a paneled door is built into the right side of the chimney breast. Recessed from the left corner of the chimney breast, a closet is entered by a narrow door with two raised panels.

Opposite the dining room on the left side of the hall, the southeast parlor displays less elaborate treatment in a similar idiom, indicating that William Sprats also remodeled this room. The chair rail encircles the room at window sill level, supporting the heavy molded window surrounds. The corner posts and perimeter ceiling beams are cased with corner beading. A summer beam across the middle of the ceiling was reinforced during the 1937 project by the addition of steel channels concealed within its casing.

The parlor's fireplace and projecting chimney breast engage the south wall. The brick firebox (rebuilt in 1937) has a slate facing and hearth. Differing from its dining-room counterpart, this fireplace is decorated with an Ionic entablature. Its opening is enframed by a molded and crossetted architrave surround that supports a heavy pulvinated frieze below the denticulated mantel cornice. The plastered chimney breast is unadorned except for beaded corner boards. Flush with the chimney breast on its right side, a closet is entered by a two-panel door with a molded surround. A small cupboard with a paneled door is built into the left side of the chimney breast.

The southwest room was extensively remodeled during the 1937 project and adapted to a library. The walls were sheathed with flush vertical pine boards, and narrow matched hardwood boards were laid on the floor. Built against the east wall, cupboards with single-panel doors support wood bookcases that rise to the plastered ceiling. The hewn ceiling joists are exposed and not cased. The window openings are enframed with molded and beaded surrounds as is the semielliptical-arched entry from the hall.

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The four corner rooms on the second floor serve as bedrooms, and share relatively plain appearance. The floors are laid with wide pine boards probably original to the house. The baseboards are plain or beaded while the doors and windows have molded surrounds. Apparently used by Simeon Smith, the northeast master bedroom is distinguished by a molded chair rail. Both the northeast and southeast (front) rooms have fireplaces with rebuilt brick fireboxes and simple molded surrounds. The northwest (rear) room has been reduced somewhat in size by the installation (probably in 1937) of a bathroom between it and the northeast room.

Barn; c. 1840?, 1876, moved c. 1937

Distinguished by polychromatic slate shingles on its gable roof, this generally plain, one-and-one-half-story barn of English type rests on concrete piers built when it was moved to this site. The rectangular plan of the barn measures 48.5 (east-west) by 30.5 (north-south) feet. Its hand-hewn, post-and-beam frame with mortise-and-tenon joints is sheathed with flush vertical boards. Battens have been added to the boards on the east half of the first story. The roof is framed with half-log rafters.

The slate shingles apparently were applied to the roof in 1876, that year being displayed in large numbers on the north slope (the slope facing the road on the barn's original site). The numbers are formed by slates of reddish color; directly above, a single-course line of the same color slate extends the full length of the roof. Along the upper edge of the slope, a pattern of rosette-like figures in the same color follows the ridge. Having been not publicly visible on the barn's original site, the south slope contrasts by being shingled with both reddish and blue-grey slate laid in a random manner.

The main (north) eaves facade presents an asymmetrical arrangement around an off-central wagon entrance. The double-leaf entrance retains on the left half a vertical-boarded door hung on hand-forged iron strap hinges. The right half has been rehung with a vertical-boarded exterior sliding door on a modern steel track. A small vertical-boarded hinged door for animals enters the right side of this facade while the left side is

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lighted by two bays of the horizontal three-pane hinged sash common to the barn.

Although facing the public road, the west gable facade lacks any fenestration or entrance. The opposite (east) gable facade, on the other hand, is punctuated by three openings. An off-central entrance has a vertical-boarded exterior sliding door inset with a six-light sash. The side bays are lighted by hinged sash like those on the main facade.

The south eaves facade appears to have been altered somewhat in the arrangement of its openings. The right half is lighted by three bays fitted with the common hinged sash. The left half has an opening that corresponds to the animal door on the opposite (main) facade; the vertical-boarded door has been removed from its hinges and now stands on the ground next to the opening. A broad horizontal board of unknown purpose extends across the left side of this facade above the door opening.

The barn stood originally near the southwest corner of the house's pre-1937 ell, being oriented parallel to the main block and the road. Several small sheds were sited near its north gable facade; these were apparently demolished during the 1937 project. The purpose of moving the barn seems to have been to clear the rear grounds for landscaping and to remove the outbuildings from the immediate vicinity of the house. The removal of the outbuildings eliminated the immediate physical association between what was a farmhouse during most of the nineteenth century and its related agricultural outbuildings. Although fully visible from the house on its present site, the barn clearly has been relegated to the background away from the landscaped grounds surrounding the house.

Garage; c. 1940 and later

Echoing somewhat the appearance of the house, the garage consists of three blocks that were constructed in stages. The original gable-roofed main block measures 24.5 (north-south) by 22.5 (east-west) feet in rectangular plan and rises one and one-half stories; it is sheathed with wide clapboards. A reduced, one-story, gabled south wing measuring 10 by 15 feet was added c. 1960 apparently for raising plants, and differs by having narrow

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clapboard siding. Attached to the rear (west) side of the main block, a one-story, shed-roofed wing of 24.5 by 14 feet was also added probably c. 1960 and shares the narrow clapboard siding of the south wing.

Both the gable roofs of the main block and the south wing are shingled with slate of reddish color although of somewhat different tone, indicating that these roofs were shingled at separate times. (The west wing's shed roof is covered with rolled asphalt.) The main block and south wing also share nearly identical eaves treatment. An unmolded stepped cornice projects slightly from the horizontal eaves. The raking eaves are closely cropped with a stepped and beaded treatment together with short returns of the horizontal cornice. All three blocks rest on concrete foundations.

The main block's east eaves facade is comprised mostly of two bays of paneled overhead doors with molded and beaded surrounds. The corners are defined by vertical boards abutting a corner bead. The south wing's recessed east facade is entered by a central five-panel door and lighted on the left by a six-pane fixed sash, both having plain surrounds like most of the building's openings.

The main block's mostly concealed south gable facade is entered on the right by a pass door with a multi-light storm insert. Visible through the south wing, a twelve-over-eight sash with a molded and beaded surround remains in place on the left side of the originally exterior wall. Coupled small six-over-six sash light the main south gable. The south wing's south gable facade is illuminated profusely by coupled six-over-six sash on the first story and a six-pane fixed sash in the gable; two small rectangular ventilating openings with hinged doors surmount the first-story windows.

The main block's opposite (north) gable facade has been altered by the addition of an exterior wood stair to serve an upper-story entrance to a small apartment. The open stair ascends the blank first story to a one-bay, shed-roofed, second-story porch with dimension posts and balustrade. The entry has a modern nine-light-over-two-panel door, flanked closely by eight-over-eight sash.

The rear (west) wing's three-bay north facade has a central vertical-boarded pass door. The side bays are occupied by the

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six-light fixed sash common to the four-bay west and three-bay south facades of this wing.

The various modern additions made to the main block have altered its appearance to the extent that the garage is considered noncontributing to the historic character of the Simeon Smith Mansion.

Wellhouse; c. 1940

The diminutive hip-roofed wellhouse of square plan measures about four feet along each side and seven feet in height at the eaves. The lower walls are sheathed with wide clapboards stopped at the corners by the square posts that constitute the principal vertical members of the structure. The upper walls are enclosed only by wire screening. An unmolded cornice follows the eaves of the roof, being similar to that on the garage. The roof is shingled with slate of reddish color, and flashed with sheet copper. A sawn wood finial surmounts the apex of the roof.

Archeological Potential

Prior to the 1937 rehabilitation project, several outbuildings of agricultural type(s) occupied the rear (west) grounds of the house. All excepting the extant barn were apparently demolished during that project, and the barn was moved to its present site. Also at that time, the terrain was regraded to a certain extent during the construction of the raised terrace adjacent to the house's west facade (the site of the original ell). Therefore, the potential exists for archeological resources beneath the present ground surface.

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The Simeon Smith Mansion holds significance for embodying the distinctive characteristics of a substantial Georgian-plan house erected c. 1789 and for possessing both high-style Federal interior decorative features and a Colonial Revival monumental portico, the latter added during a 1937 rehabilitation. The Federal interior features appear to represent the work of William Sprats, a leading Connecticut architect and builder of the late eighteenth century who is known to have lived in the West Haven region around the turn of the nineteenth century. This house reflects the financial success achieved by Simeon Smith, a physician and entrepreneur from Connecticut who settled in then-Fair Haven township about 1787 and became a prominent public figure and landowner in western Rutland County.

Within the context of Vermont architecture, the Simeon Smith Mansion constitutes a unique blend of type and style. It ranks among the earliest extant houses in the west-central part of the state near the New York border. More specifically, this house belongs among the limited number of large Georgian-plan houses that were constructed during the late eighteenth century to serve as farmhouses in rural areas. Like many of these houses, the Smith Mansion originally possessed a plain exterior appearance. Its appearance was transformed by the distinctive monumental portico with alternating paired and single columns that was added in 1937 during an extensive rehabilitation. Designed by Payson R. Webber, an architect from Rutland, the Colonial Revival alteration of the Mansion represents an important architectural trend in Vermont during the second quarter of this century.

The Simeon Smith Mansion is further distinguished from contemporary houses in Vermont by its elaborate interior decorative treatment attributed to William Sprats. That architect and builder was involved in the construction of two other houses adjacent to the Smith Mansion during the late 1790s or early 1800s; contrasting with the Smith Mansion, those two houses exhibit higher style Federal exterior design. Only one other building, a meetinghouse in the northwestern town of Georgia, is known to have been designed and constructed by Sprats in Vermont; completed in 1802, that building was destroyed by fire in 1952. Sprats may also have constructed one or more houses to the north of Georgia in St. Albans township. At the present, however, the three West Haven houses hold the distinction of being the only extant buildings in Vermont that are specifically associated with William Sprats and represent his outstanding achievement in New England architecture.

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A native of Suffield, Connecticut, Dr. Simeon Smith (1733-1804) moved to Fair Haven township from Sharon, Connecticut in 1787. Smith was a physician and druggist by profession but had also become a merchant who, according to Hamilton Child's Rutland County gazetteer, was "compelled by business misfortunes to leave Connecticut." He belonged to a family prominent in the state's religious and political affairs, and his "misfortunes" must have been highly embarrassing to force him into exile on the Vermont frontier.

His nephew, John Cotton Smith (1765-1845) of Sharon, was an aspiring young lawyer when retained by Simeon during the late 1780s to deal with his Connecticut financial problems. Writing later about that experience, John Cotton noted that "after my admission to the Bar (in March, 1786), I was soon introduced into an active exercise of my profession, arising from the pecuniary embarrassments of the community in consequence of the Revolutionary war, and particularly from the extensive and entangled affairs of my uncle, who removed to Vermont, leaving the management of his complicated concerns in my inexperienced hands." John Cotton was able to resolve those affairs so as to leave Simeon "at last in the enjoyment of a handsome estate. For all which, ... he ultimately bestowed upon me a generous testimonial of his gratitude and affection. John Cotton Smith would serve as Congressional representative, judge on the Connecticut Supreme Court, and the state's governor during the first two decades of the next century.

Simeon Smith settled in the western half of Fair Haven township, which had been chartered only eight years prior to his arrival. Horace Greeley in his autobiography, Recollections of a Busy Life, describes what may have attracted Smith to the Fair Haven area: "This whole region was thickly covered by heavy timber, - in good part, white pine, - when its devastation by our race commenced; and its proximity to navigable water, with the abundance of mill-streams everywhere pervading it, incited its rapid monopoly for 'lumbering' purposes." Smith undertook the construction of a sawmill on the Hubbardton River, and, according to Greeley, "did great execution upon the pines; rapidly amassing wealth, and becoming an extensive landholder."

In February, 1789, Smith acquired from Eleazer Dudley "one certain tract of land lying and being in the township of Fair Haven aforesaid containing one hundred acres and is the same

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piece of land I [Dudley] hold by lease from a Committee appointed by the Town of Fair Haven for the purpose of leasing school lands and what I now convey is Lot No. 12 in the first Division of the School Right containing one hundred acres after allowance for highways...." The acquisition of the lot in February would have enabled Smith to initiate the construction later the same year of what Greeley called his "spacious mansion."

The resulting Georgian-plan house would have been imposing simply in scale, being two and one-half stories in height and about 52 by 36 feet in dimensions. But the original appearance of the house may have lacked its high-style interior decorative features that are linked to William Sprats (c. 1757-1810), a leading Connecticut architect and joiner of the period. Sprats was born in Scotland under the name William Pretcell and apparently received some training in architectural design and the building crafts. After serving in the British army during the Revolutionary War, he changed his name and lived in Connecticut for several years. He is known to have been engaged in the construction of elaborate Georgian-Federal style houses and a courthouse in Litchfield County during the 1790s. Near the end of the century, he moved to Hampton, New York, directly across the Poultney River from Fair Haven and West Haven, where he is known to have owned a farm with animals. He also owned a building and land in the adjacent town of Whitehall, New York.

It is not known how William Sprats became involved in building or remodeling houses for the Smith family in West Haven. The link may have occurred through other members of the family who remained in Connecticut and knew of Sprats' work there. The scant evidence suggests that Sprats may have been hired by Simeon Smith to embellish his spacious but relatively austere mansion, probably about 1800 after Sprats had settled in the region. The high-style ornamental features in the dining room and parlor virtually match corresponding features in the Julius Deming House, Litchfield, Connecticut, designed and built by William Sprats in 1790-93. (The resulting stylistic distinction between those two rooms and the plainer other rooms in the Smith house may have been blurred somewhat by a subsequent Colonial Revival renovation of the house carried out in 1937.)

Sprats seems to have pursued his trade mostly in Vermont during the first decade of the nineteenth century (and the last decade of his life). Sprats was present in West Haven on September 4, 1800, when he witnessed a bill of sale from Charles Rice to

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Simeon Smith; by that time, Sprats probably had done building or joinery work for one or both of them. During the next two years, Sprats was engaged in the construction of the meetinghouse in the town of Georgia; it was a virtual duplicate of the Litchfield County courthouse that he had erected the previous decade. Returning to the West Haven area, he borrowed money from Smith both in 1802 and 1803, presumably to finance some of his building activity.

A letter written in 1904 by Polly Maria Goodrich, a granddaughter of Sprats, affirms that he worked in the Fair Haven-West Haven area although without specifying the period. "There are 3 or 4 houses now standing that he built or planned ... they are the old Gilbert mansion & the house by the old tavern ..., then the one near the Gilbert house, all fine large buildings with the unmistakable mark of Continental times, and are really quite aristocratic in their old age." The first of these ("the old Gilbert mansion") is the house known to have been originally constructed for Simeon Smith about 1789 (while William Sprats was living in Connecticut), and the subject of this National Register nomination. Smith lived in this house until his death in 1804; the Gilbert family owned it during the middle nineteenth century.

The second house ("the house by the old tavern") stands a short distance to the east of Simeon Smith's mansion beside the road to Fair Haven (now Route 22A). This house was built for Dan Smith, a nephew of Simeon, who had moved to Fair Haven from Sharon, Connecticut about the same time as his uncle. Dan Smith purchased the 15-acre lot from Christopher and Catherine (widow of Simeon) Smith Minot and John Cotton Smith (co-heirs of Simeon) in October, 1805, indicating that the house was not constructed or completed until at least the following year (1806). Its hip-roofed form and high-style Federal character correspond to houses built by Sprats in Connecticut.

The third house ("the one near the Gilbert house") is sited a short distance northeast of Simeon Smith's mansion on the north side of the West Haven road. This Federal style house was built probably during the middle 1790s for Charles Rice, who, with a succession of partners, kept a tavern and store on the premises. The house possesses a second-floor ballroom (typical of Vermont taverns during the period) distinguished by high-style decorative features matching interior features in Simeon Smith's house. A brother-in-law of Smith, Rice had borrowed a substantial amount of money from him and may have failed financially by 1800 when he

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sold the house and 248 acres of land (plus an adjacent one-acre distillery lot) to Smith; the low sale price of \$1,000 probably reflects the amount of the debt. In another transaction in September of the same year, Rice sold to Smith the tavern's furnishings (including 24 chairs, tables, beds, dishes, glassware, and silverware) for \$700. William Sprats' name appears as witness on that bill of sale, suggesting that he held an interest in the property possibly as the builder.

Simeon Smith, however, kept the property only three years, selling it in 1803 to Asher Huggins for \$1,300 (excepting a half-interest in the store that he retained for his brother-in-law, Charles Rice). Smith held a mortgage from Huggins on the property that was later foreclosed, and John Cotton Smith gained possession after Simeon's death. John Cotton Smith held title to the house for 32 years between 1810 and 1842, referring to it in his papers as the "Huggins Place." (This house was listed in the National Register on March 3, 1983 under the inappropriate name of "Simeon Smith House.")

Meanwhile, ensconced in his imposing country seat, Simeon Smith continued to practice medicine and dispense drugs, keeping a large stock of the latter in his house. His most profitable venture, however, seems to have been speculation and dealing in land. He eventually owned land in West Haven, Fair Haven, and Benson townships in Vermont and Hampton and Whitehall, New York. Smith also served as a private banker, and held many mortgages on property in the region.

The increasingly wealthy and influential Smith participated actively in local and state politics. He served as a selectman of Fair Haven during 1789-91, and represented that town in the Vermont Legislature in 1789, the year when he was also elected an assistant judge of the Rutland County Court. In 1791, he was the Fair Haven delegate to the convention at Bennington where the United States constitution was ratified by Vermont. The following year, he became the probate judge of the Fair Haven district.

Several years of agitation between residents of the western and eastern halves of the elongated Fair Haven township concluded in 1792 when the Legislature subdivided the western half into a new township by the name of West Haven. Simeon Smith was the Fair Haven representative at that time, but the boundary selected to divide the townships left his house a short distance inside West

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Haven and he represented both towns when he returned to the Legislature in 1797. Meanwhile, in 1793, he was the delegate from West Haven at the Vermont Constitutional Convention held in Windsor.

Smith's first wife, Elizabeth, died in 1794, and he subsequently married Catherine Cutler (1761-1833). Neither marriage produced any children, leaving Simeon without a direct heir. His own health seems to have failed soon after the turn of the nineteenth century. In February, 1802, "being weak in body but of sound mind and perfect memory," he prepared his last will and testament. He lived two more years, dying February 27, 1804. He was buried next to Elizabeth in the small Carver Falls Cemetery located near the south side of his home farm. At the time of his death, Simeon Smith ranked among the wealthiest men in Rutland County; the value of his estate was estimated at \$80,000.

Catherine ("my dear and beloved wife Katy") Smith inherited from Simeon "one-half of all my estate both real and personal." John Cotton Smith was granted the next largest share, and other members of the family received small amounts. Furthermore, Simeon bequeathed to the Town of West Haven the sum of \$1,000 primarily for the support of public school(s). The money, however, was restricted to an investment fund for a period of sixty years, and that fund had appreciated to a value of about \$23,000 in 1868 when it became available for use by the Town. (The Smith Fund has been maintained to the present, 1990, as a source of funds for local education).

Soon after Simeon's death, the Fair Haven Probate Court appointed a committee to compile a comprehensive "inventory of the real and personal estate of Simeon Smith Esquire." One of the two appointees was Asher Huggins, who had purchased the former Charles Rice tavern-house from Simeon and had witnessed the signing of his will. The committee's detailed schedule records the contents of individual rooms in the mansion, enabling the identification of their uses during Smith's occupancy.

On the first floor, the "north room" (the present northeast dining room) contained a "large mahogana table," six "mahogana chairs," and eighteen "dining chairs," confirming that it was then the dining room. The "south room" (the southeast parlor) apparently served also as Simeon's library; the list of books includes volumes on religion, history, law, and medicine. The southwest room (adapted to a library in 1937) appears to have

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been Simeon's office and the room where he entertained male guests; its contents included a desk, easy chair, "money scales & waits," and a backgammon table. On the second floor, the quantity of man's clothing in the "north chamber" (the northeast bedroom) indicates that it was the master bedroom. Nearly half of the schedule consists of "Medacine in the Medacine Room;" however, the position of that room in the house is not indicated.

The committee's inventory of "Lands and Buildings" owned by Smith specifies nineteen different tracts of land totaling 2,474 acres and appraised at \$14,919. The first entry is the 45-acre "home lot with the dwelling house two barns and out houses theiron [sic]," valued at \$2,375. The second entry is a 234-acre tract "between the last piece and Dan Smith's & running to East bay [the Poultney River estuary of Lake Champlain]; this land was appraised at \$1,102. The third entry is the most valuable: the 580-acre "Ledge Farm" worth \$5,186. Several other entries are also identified as named farms; presumably these were being operated by tenant farmers. The last entry in this group is "one half of the distillary including one half of the utentials [sic] vessels of every kind," appraised at \$750. This apparently referred to a distillery (previously owned by Charles Rice and others) that was situated northeast of the mansion near the present intersection of the West Haven Road and Route 22A.

One year after Simeon Smith's death, Catherine remarried. Her second husband was Christopher Minot (1753-1824), the cashier of a bank in Boston and probably an acquaintance of Simeon. The couple lived in Boston for a brief period and then returned to West Haven where they resided in the Smith mansion.

William Sprats, meanwhile, was apparently involved in the construction of Dan Smith's nearby house about 1806. This was his last-known building activity prior to his death in 1810. He was buried in the Carver Falls Cemetery near Simeon Smith's grave. His first and second wives, Elizabeth and Martha, are also buried there together with one son, Andrew, and his wife, Permelia. (Their matching headstones probably were placed on the graves later in the century by other members of the family.) The Smith and Sprats families became related by marriage during the middle nineteenth century. Furthermore, Horace S. Smith and Caroline Spratt (as the family then spelled the name) acquired from John Cotton Smith the house attributed to William Sprats northeast of the Simeon Smith mansion.

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A settlement was concluded in 1808 between Catherine Smith Minot and John Cotton Smith regarding property that they inherited in common from Simeon Smith. Catherine and Christopher Minot then received clear title to "the home lot whereon the said Simeon lived being a part of what is called the school lot ... together with the dwelling house thereon and the barns and other buildings appurtenant thereto...." Christopher Minot apparently became a gentleman farmer who employed a working farmer to operate the home farm; Stephen Fish served in that role between about 1810 and 1827.

Around 1820, Minot hired Zaccheus Greeley, father of Horace Greeley (1811-72), to work in his woodlands. As recounted by Horace in Recollections of a Busy Life, the Greeley family's "first home in Vermont was on his estate, and within a few rods of his mansion; and we mainly worked for him, or on his land, while we lived in that town." Zaccheus was assisted by the schoolboy Horace in clearing land and chopping wood. Horace had already displayed precocious interest in reading, consuming voraciously almost any kind of book or publication within his reach but especially history, poetry, and newspapers (he had decided at the age of six to become a printer). The local district school offered little of value to him. Christopher Minot recognized his need, and permitted Horace to read from his fairly extensive library. The boy was not allowed to borrow the books so he spent countless hours reading in the mansion. Within a few years (1826), Horace walked to East Poultney and took his first job in a newspaper office. His subsequent achievements as founding editor (in 1841) of the New York Tribune and social reformer are universally known.

Neither the farm nor Christopher Minot's other enterprise(s) seems to have been overly remunerative. Horace Greeley notes in his Recollections that Minot died (August 22, 1824) before his father was paid for the land clearing that they had done, and that they "were juggled out of a part of our pay" after Minot's estate was declared insolvent. Catherine Smith Minot, nevertheless, continued to reside on the home farm until her death in 1833.

A half-brother of Catherine Minot, the locally prominent Tilly Gilbert (1771-1850) inherited the Smith mansion and farm from her. Gilbert pursued several different interests and activities during his lifetime, corresponding in some ways to Simeon Smith himself. He came from Massachusetts to Fair Haven initially in

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1788 but also lived for short periods in several adjacent towns during the remainder of the century. He became a school teacher and studied medicine with local doctors. During the 1790s, he shifted to the mercantile business and iron manufacturing. After 1800, he lived in Fair Haven and continued in business with a store while selling drugs and medicines on the side and owning two different saw mills. In 1803, he became town clerk of Fair Haven and thereafter held that position for three decades excepting only the period 1809-13. Additionally, he represented Fair Haven in the Vermont Legislature during the years 1812, 1814, and 1832.

In 1832 or 1833, Gilbert moved to what had become known as the "Minot place" in West Haven. He remained here until his death on September 5, 1850. Also like Simeon Smith, Tilly Gilbert owned extensive tracts of land in addition to the home farm, much of that land probably inherited from Catherine Minot (and therefore earlier owned by Smith). The Agricultural Census of 1850 records Gilbert's ownership in two entities. The home farm appears presumably as the 100-acre entity while the other listing covers a total of 1,100 acres, probably agglomerating his other holdings rather than being a single (and extraordinarily large) farm entity. Persons other than Gilbert must have been responsible for the actual operation of these farms, especially in 1850 when he was 79 years of age.

The 100-acre farm consisted of 75 improved (cultivated) and 25 unimproved acres that yielded a diversity of products. The farm's cash value was then \$2,000, a figure that seems to undervalue the property - especially if the Smith mansion was accounted part of this farm. The farm implements and machinery were worth \$150. The livestock was valued at \$500; it included two horses, three milch cows, five other cattle, two swine, and 128 sheep. Both butter (400 pounds) and cheese (150 pounds) were made, and 500 pounds of wool were clipped. The field crops were relatively small in volume, including 75 bushels of Irish potatoes, 50 of Indian corn, 15 of oats, and 7 of wheat. The quantity of hay cut was contrastingly large at 200 tons although probably needed to feed his livestock here and elsewhere during the winter.

Following the death of his father in 1850, James Jarvis Gilbert (1800-?) and probably his second wife, Sarah C. (Beach), returned to West Haven to reside on what was becoming known as the "Gilbert place." The younger Gilbert was a Congregational

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minister who served in several New York and western Vermont towns, including West Haven. He was also a farmer, and the Agricultural Census of 1860 provides a record of his activity in that year.

The farm is listed as having 50 acres of improved land and 50 acres of unimproved land, the cash value of the whole then being \$3,000 plus \$100 in farm implements and machinery. Gilbert's livestock was valued at only \$190, and comprised one horse, two milch cows, two other cattle, and two swine (but not any sheep, a principal difference from the 1850 census record). He made 500 pounds of butter, presumably for market. His field crops included 150 bushels of oats, 100 bushels of Irish potatoes, 100 bushels of Indian corn, 30 bushels of rye, and 30 bushels of wheat together with the smallish quantity of 14 tons of hay.

It was not until 1865, fifteen years after the death of Tilly Gilbert, that the executor of his estate sold "the home farm on which the buildings stand," containing 108 acres of land. The title was transferred to Sarah Ann (Harrington) Briggs (1834-95), the wife of Justus G. Briggs (1827-96). The Briggs family retained possession of the farm during the remainder of the nineteenth century. The most prominent symbol of their ownership was apparently created in 1876 when polychromatic slate shingles were applied to the roof of the extant English barn. The barn itself may have been constructed in that year, although its hand-hewn and half-log framing materials indicate an earlier origin.

The Agricultural Census of 1880 records the relatively modest extent of Justus Briggs' agricultural activity. The figures for improved (100) and unimproved (30) acreages exceed the total (108) known to have been purchased by the Briggs. However, the cash value of the farm was listed as only \$500 - an inexplicable anomaly given the character of the mansion - augmented by the \$125 value of farm implements and machinery.

The livestock kept on the farm was then worth \$700. The animals included five horses, five milch cows, two other cattle, and two swine. Briggs purchased 22 sheep during the course of the year. His primary activity seems to have been dairying; he made 800 pounds of butter presumably for market and clipped 150 pounds of wool.

Briggs raised a variety of field crops. The largest quantity was 425 bushels of Irish potatoes grown on two acres followed by 200

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bushels of oats from four acres and 100 bushels of Indian corn from two acres. His lesser harvests included 15 bushels of rye, 10 bushels of buckwheat, and nine bushels of wheat, each from an acre of land. He mowed 50 acres for a total of 40 tons of hay, and cut 10 cords of wood presumably for heating the mansion. The total value of his agricultural production for the year was \$750.

Sarah and Justus Briggs died within a year of each other in the middle 1890s. A few years later (1902), the Briggs family sold the farm to Earl W. and Kathryn H. Morehouse. The Morehouses paid \$2250 for the buildings and the 108 acres "more or less." They probably continued some agricultural activity here during at least a portion of their ownership, and thereby became the last owners to do so. The national economic collapse of the 1930s undoubtedly diminished their financial condition, and the house was allowed to fall into disrepair.

Early in 1937, Frederick S. Allen, the president of the Allen National Bank in Fair Haven, purchased the property from the then-widow, Kathryn Morehouse. Allen may have felt a personal interest in the property for being distantly related both to Simeon Smith and William Sprats. In any case, he undertook an intensive rehabilitation of the deteriorating house and the removal of the outbuildings.

Allen retained Payson R. Webber, an architect from Rutland, Vermont, to design the renovation of the house. Unfortunately, the plans for the project have been destroyed, and Payson Webber - now retired in Rutland - remembers only the general nature of what was done more than a half-century ago. The most obvious change in the house's appearance involved the addition to the main facade of the monumental portico with a distinctive pattern of alternating single and paired Tuscan columns.

A limited photographic record of the house and outbuildings does survive from the 1937 project. Frederick Allen took a series of snapshots that show the buildings both prior to the onset of the work and during the course of it. These photographs document that the outstanding stylistic features of the house, especially the dining room treatment, existed prior to the rehabilitation and therefore were presumably the design or work of William Sprats. Certain other stylistically similar features - e.g., the semielliptical-arched alcove in the second-story center hall - were added to the house, representing the Colonial Revival design

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of Payson Webber. The actual work was performed partly by a local carpenter named George Rogers. The result exhibits highly skilled craftsmanship in the meticulous restoration and reproduction of historic fabric. The cost of \$50,000 apparently greatly exceeded Allen's expectation.

Every facade of the house's main block received at least slight modification. The main facade, of course, was visually altered by the monumental portico with its curved roof. Behind the portico, however, the changes were limited to the replacement in kind of the front door (albeit retaining the historic hardware) and the restoration of twelve-over-twelve sash in place of the two-over-two sash that had been installed on the first-story windows. The other sash were replaced in kind but the unbroken original lights of glass were salvaged and used in the new twelve-over-twelve sash. Similarly slight changes were made in both gable facades; most notably, an additional window was opened in the north facade's second story after a fireplace and its interior hanging chimney were removed. The large twin chimneys on the front roof slope were mostly rebuilt owing to their hazardous condition.

The rear (west) facade was altered to the greatest extent. A severely deteriorated, one-and-one-half-story, gabled ell was removed from the central position and replaced by a similar ell attached to the left side flush with the north gable facade. New door and window openings were created within the surface area concealed by the previous ell. The irregular horizontal-board sheathing of this entire facade was replaced by lapped horizontal boards matching those elsewhere on the house (the same was done to a lesser extent on the other facades).

The interior of the house was largely stripped of its finish materials and then restored in kind. The walls and ceilings were mostly replastered and the woodwork was repaired or duplicated where necessary. An exception occurred in the first-floor southwest room, where the walls were sheathed with vertical pine boards and built-in bookcases were installed to accommodate Frederick Allen's library. Some additional molded surrounds were applied, especially to doors on the second floor where additional closets and bathrooms were built; the semielliptical-arched alcove was added to the center hall for that purpose. The architect may have been inspired by a similar original arch in the first-story alcove leading to the southwest room; that arch appears in pre-project photographs. To reinforce discretely a

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sagging summer beam in the southeast parlor ceiling, the architect embedded steel channels within the casing.

The present lack of a main stair in the center hall - the usual position in the Georgian floor plan - remains an unresolved question. No physical evidence now exists of such a stair within the hall. Prior to 1937, there were apparently two relatively narrow stairs to the second floor, one next to each side of the hall and ascending from the rear of the first floor. The south stair was removed during the 1937 project and the space was converted to a closet. The north stair was then rebuilt as the only access to the second floor. (The apparently original attic stair remains in place directly above the latter.)

While the house was being sympathetically rehabilitated, the agricultural outbuildings were treated quite differently. Several small, one-story, gabled sheds grouped behind the house's former ell were entirely removed during the project. The barn stood relatively close to the southwest, oriented parallel to the main block and the road. (The roof slope bearing the year 1876 in polychromatic slate undoubtedly faced the road.) In order to convert the barnyard to landscaped grounds, the barn was moved by horse and rollers across the road to its present site and perpendicular orientation.

Frederick Allen enjoyed the occupancy of the refurbished house and his rural estate for less than a decade. A divorce settlement in 1945 awarded the property to Lillian Allen, and she retained possession only until 1950. Other relatively short-term owners followed but they did not make appreciable changes in the appearance of the house.

The current owners, David Dana and Judith Nash Nelson, acquired the property in 1987. It continues to incorporate the same 108 acres of land identified in the 1865 sale to the Briggs family. Much of that land remains open hayfield and is mowed seasonally by a neighboring farmer, thereby representing its historic agricultural usage. The barn, although moved from its original site, contributes an intact architectural expression of agricultural activity highlighted by the year 1876 emblazoned on its slate roof. And the "spacious mansion" retains its unique synthesis of eighteenth-century vernacular fabric, Federal-style interior decoration, and Colonial Revival additions, the achievement of architects and builders working some 150 years apart.

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BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary of the Simeon Smith Mansion property encompasses the buildings and an irregularly shaped tract of 108 acres of land. The property adjoins the southerly side of West Haven Road, and is traversed in a northeast-southwest direction by Smith (now known as Doran) Road. Along the northerly side of the property, the boundary extends 1555 feet on a bearing of South 42 degrees 45 minutes East following the southerly edge of the West Haven Road right-of-way. Along the easterly side, the boundary extends 1360 feet at South 33 degrees West and thence a total of 1102.5 feet in a series of short courses in a southerly direction. Along the southerly side, the boundary extends 693 feet at South 61 degrees West, thence 264 feet at South 66 degrees 30 minutes West, thence about 950 feet in a westerly direction along the north shore of the Poultney River reservoir behind the Carver Falls Dam, and thence about 66 feet along the shore downstream from the dam. Along the westerly side, the boundary extends 445.5 feet at North 22 degrees East, thence 310 feet at North 73 degrees West, thence 1120 feet at North 17 degrees East, thence 280.5 feet at South 73 degrees East, thence 343 feet at North 82 degrees 30 minutes East, and thence 2293 feet at North 17 degrees East, returning to the West Haven Road right-of-way. The boundary is shown on the accompanying copy of the "Plan of Steele and Higginson Premises," the Simeon Smith Mansion property.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary includes the Simeon Smith Mansion and outbuildings together with 55 acres of the so-called School Lot along the West Haven Road plus an abutting 53-acre area extending southward to the Poultney River. Simeon Smith acquired this land during the period 1787-89 and it became part of his much more extensive holdings in the vicinity. The 108-acre tract was subdivided from the remainder during the middle nineteenth century, and subsequently has been retained in common ownership with the buildings. This land is included in the nomination both for its long-term historic association with the Smith Mansion and for its function as the visual setting of the house and outbuildings.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

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The following information repeats for all photographs except where noted:

Simeon Smith Mansion
West Haven, Vermont
Credit: Hugh H. Henry
Date: September 1990
Negative filed at Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

Photograph 1
Setting of mansion and outbuildings; view looking southwest.

Photograph 2
Mansion - east and north facades; view looking southwest.

Photograph 3
Mansion - main entrance on east facade; view looking northwest.

Photograph 4
Mansion - south facade; view looking northeast.

Photograph 5
Mansion - west and south facades; view looking east.

Photograph 6
Mansion - Interior of northeast dining room; view looking north.

Photograph 7
Barn - east and north facades; view looking southwest.

Photograph 8
Garage - south and east facades; view looking north.

Photograph 9
Wellhouse - south and east facades; view looking north.

Photograph 10
Credit: Frederick S. Allen
Date: 1937
Mansion and former outbuildings on rear (west) grounds - west facades; view looking southeast.

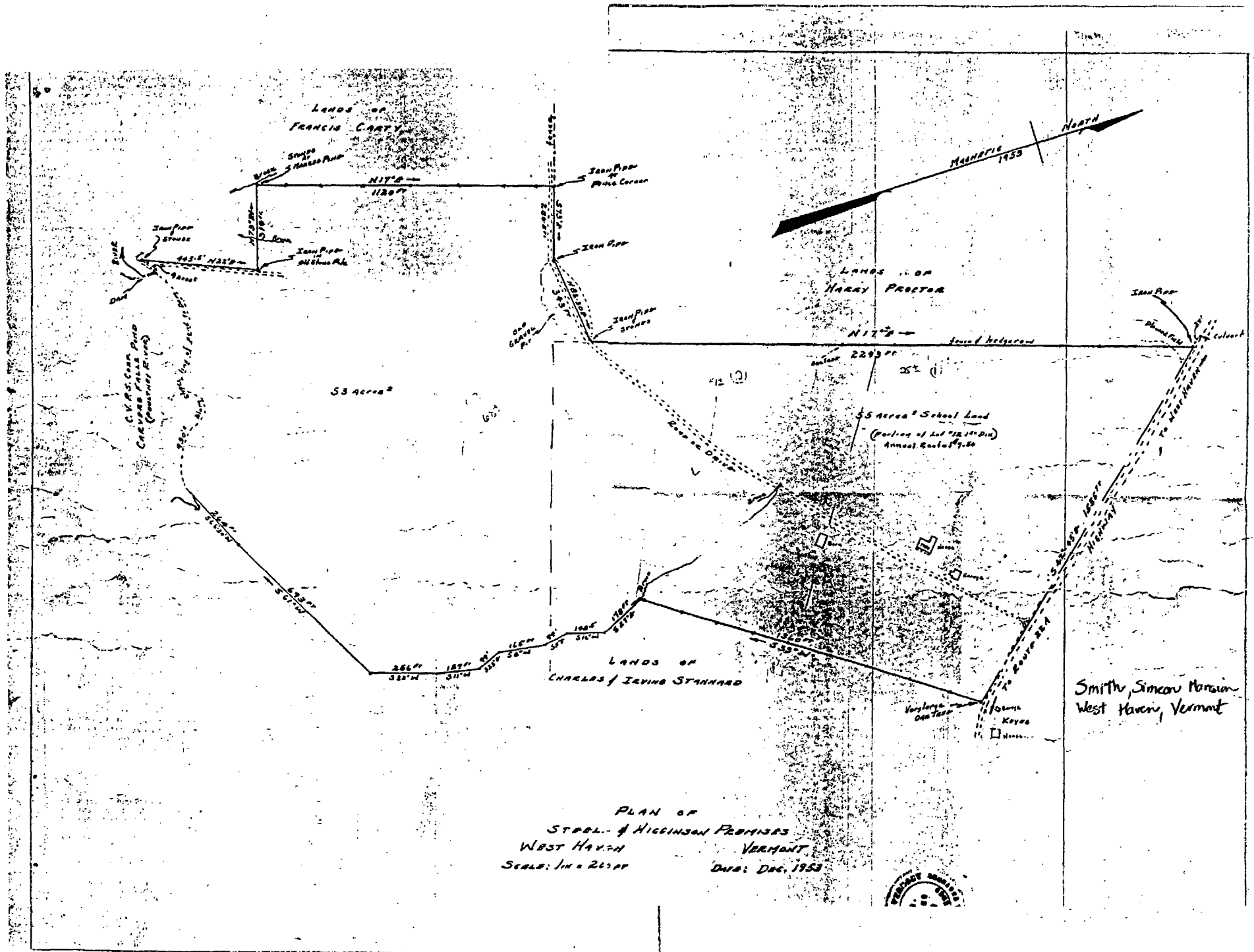
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PROPERTY OWNER

David D. and Judith N. Nelson
P.O. Box 448
Fair Haven, Vermont 05743



PLAN OF
STEBBINS & HIGGINSON PROPERTIES
WEST HAVEN
VERMONT
SCALE: 1 in = 200 ft
DATE: DEC, 1953



Smith, Simon Hanson
West Haven, Vermont