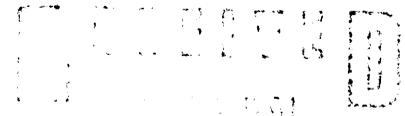


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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

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 George Pickering Nichols House
other names/site number Davis/Sharkey House

2. Location

street & number 42 Thompson Road not for publication NA
city, town Thompson vicinity NA
state Connecticut code CT county Windham code 015 zip code 06277

3. Classification

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

Name of related multiple property listing: NA
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register NA

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] 6/28/91
Signature of certifying official Date
Director, Connecticut Historical Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

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:)

Entered in the
National Register

[Signature] 7/31/91
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

[Signature]

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Mid-19th Century/Greek Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone-granite

walls Wood-clapboard

Synthetic-vinyl

roof Asphalt

other brick

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The George Pickering Nichols House, a two-story Greek Revival farmhouse, was built c.1846 and contains 13 rooms. (note #1) (photograph #1) Located in Thompson, Connecticut, it stands on the north side of Route 193, several hundred feet west of Interstate 395 and approximately one-and-one-quarter miles from the Thompson Green, which is the historic center of the town. (note #2)

The Nichols House property contains about 1.4 acres (note #3) and slopes upward to the north in terraces. Fieldstone walls mark the boundaries in most places. The house is set back about 60 feet from the street and is surrounded by lawn. Running along the street and connected to the east and west front corners of the house is a white picket fence resting on a granite ashlar and fieldstone retaining wall. The modern fence reproduces one shown in old photographs. (photographs #2 & 2a)(note #4) Near the front gate is a granite carriage step, and the front walk is highlighted by four sets of granite block steps, one at each terraced rise in the lawn. Wide granite steps also serve the porch in the side wing. Flanking the walk is a pair of mature maple trees.

Near the house on the west is a c.1985 garage/studio that is similar to the house in proportions, materials, and detailing. (note #5) The surrounding area is mostly wooded or open fields (photograph #3), and only one other building, a modern Cape Cod-style house (c.1940), is visible from this property. A few hundred feet west of the parcel is the cemetery where members of the Nichols family are buried, including those who owned this house from the time of construction until 1941.

The gable-roofed dwelling is L-shaped, with a rectangular two-story gable-front main block (25' x 32') and a long two-story wing (40' x 22') projecting from the west elevation. (photograph #4) Originally one-and-one-half stories high, the wing was raised to its present height around 1880. (note #6) Its exterior detailing

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Thompson, CT

matches the rest of the house.

Spanning the three-bay facade of the main section is a one-story porch, also dating from c.1880, that has molded chamfered posts. (photograph #5) In the left bay of the facade is the main entrance, which consists of a slightly recessed paneled door flanked by long sidelights and molded pilasters. The pedimented front gable is sheathed in flushboards and contains a Palladian-influenced three-part window. Molded pilasters embellish the corners of the building and support a plain frieze and molded cornice. Recessed in the facade of the wing is a three-bay porch, embellished with paneled posts, that has been enclosed by the present owners with large single-light glass walls in each bay. (note #7) Projecting from the east elevation of the main block is a c.1880 one-story three-sided bay with incised curvilinear brackets. (photograph #6) At the kitchen entrance in the west elevation of the wing is a small modern wooden deck with a stairway to a non-original second-floor rear entrance. (photograph #7)

The foundation is fieldstone below grade, retaining its original dry construction in large part (photograph #8), and ashlar granite above. The basement has a modern concrete floor. Original clapboards sheath the exterior walls and are visible on the facade and west elevation of the main block and the front elevation of the wing; elsewhere, vinyl siding covers the clapboards. Old wood shutters frame most of the windows, which are six-over-six sash with few exceptions. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles. Recently restored brick chimneys, which rest on original stone foundations, rise from the roof above each section.

The wood framing original to each component of the 3000-square-foot building is mostly intact, as is the floor plan (see Fig. 1). The floors are wide-board pitch pine and the walls are horsehair plaster (except as noted below), with beaded and boxed corner posts. The woodwork, in the form of baseboards and window and door frames, is molded and channeled, with several different patterns displayed around the windows. (photograph #9) Beneath the long windows in the front parlor are molded panels. (photograph #10) As is customary in houses of the period, the woodwork is more intricate on the first floor and in the second-floor hallway than elsewhere. The house has beveled four-panel doors (photograph #11) and a main stairway whose

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Thompson, CT

features include a heavy turned newel post and balusters. (photograph #12). To either side of the sidelights flanking the front door are long narrow closets, an unusual feature. (photograph #13) In the attic, the framing is sawn, pegged with mortise and tenon joints, and braced; the five-sided ridgepole is hand-hewn. (photograph #14)

The current owners purchased the house in 1980 and have sought to restore the building's original appearance. Most of the original structural elements and detailing survive. They have introduced replacement components for lost features that reproduce the old or are of the same period. This is the case with some of the windows and about half of the interior doors. Inappropriate prior alterations, such as a non-original two-story exterior stairway near the front left corner of the house, have been removed. In restoring the chimneys, the owners have recreated the original wall between the front and rear parlors and installed a front parlor fireplace surround that is similar in detailing to the old woodwork. (photograph #15) Several rooms in the wing suffered extensive fire damage, but surviving original features include the framing, floors, kitchen wainscoting, and the front elevation exterior door.

Notes.

1. Nichols family tradition holds that the house was built in 1846 by George P. Nichols. (23 October 1980 letter from Margaret Nichols Simonds, of Kansas City, MO, granddaughter of George H. Nichols, to Bernard Davis; original in possession of present owners) Supporting this assumption is the fact that most of the other Greek Revival dwellings in Thompson also date from the 1840s.
2. The hill leading up to the Green was known historically as "Tip Nichols' Hill" in recognition of George H. "Tip" Nichols, who was a long-time resident of the house.
3. The Nichols farm once comprised 260 acres. See the "Historical Note" under Item #8 for a discussion of its change over time.

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George Pickering Nichols House
Thompson, CT

4. This c.1900 photograph, in the possession of the current owners, is a copy of one owned by Margaret Nichols Simonds of Kansas City, MO. Cf. to photograph #2a, a 1990 view from the same location.
5. The only other structures on the property, located near the western property line, are two wood-framed sheds of modern vintage.
6. See 23 October 1980 letter referred to in note #1 above. Interestingly, the original framing of the wing roof was retained and raised to its present height. The front porch was added at the same time.
7. The porch glazing was made to be reversible.

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.1846, c.1880

Significant Dates

NA

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Significant Person

NA

Architect/Builder

NA

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

The c.1846 George Pickering Nichols House is architecturally significant because it is a fine example of a rural Connecticut residence in the Greek Revival style that appears to retain most of its original features. The framing and detailing typify mid-19th-century construction practices of the area. Its setting strongly evokes the era of its construction. The long association of the house with the Nichols family, who occupied the residence for almost 100 years, adds historical interest. The Nicholoses were early settlers of the area, and members of the family who lived here were prominent in local and state affairs.

Architectural Significance

The Nichols House exemplifies construction techniques and stylistic elements of the Greek Revival period in Connecticut. Among the many features establishing its age are the pegged post-and-beam framing; the size, proportion, and arrangement of the exterior elements; and inside, the floor plan and the wide pine flooring. The structural framework of the building is mostly intact and in excellent condition, as is much of the interior detailing.

Inside and out, the well-executed features of the Nichols House typify Greek Revival architecture both locally and throughout Connecticut. (note #1) Characteristic elements include the pedimented gable-front plan, the pilasters at the corners of the house, and the molded and channeled interior woodwork. Distinctive elements of the design, found on few other Greek Revival houses in Thompson, are the tripartite window in the front gable and the recessed porch in the side wing. front gable and the

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

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 1.4 acres

UTM References

A

1	8	2	6	0	9	1	0	4	6	4	7	7	5	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D

Zone			Easting				Northing							

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of this property, for National Register purposes, are identical to those found in volume 167, page 103 of the Thompson, CT land records, which is the deed into the present owners.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary conforms to the present property lines. This parcel is part of a larger farm property formerly associated with the Nichols House. Over time, the farm was subdivided, leaving the present 1.4-acre parcel on which stand the only extant buildings historically associated with the farm.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By Reviewed by John Herzan, National Register Coordinator

name/title Gregory E. Andrews
organization Consultant date 27 June 1991
street & number 1643 Boulevard telephone (203) 561-3841
city or town West Hartford state CT zip code 06107

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George Pickering Nichols House
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Also contributing to the significance of the property is its rural setting. Few of the extant Greek Revival dwellings in Thompson are farmsteads such as this. (note #2) The property retains in large measure its distinctive historic appearance. Historic landscape features surrounding the house remain intact, such as the granite retaining wall and old trees flanking the entrance, or have been faithfully restored, as is the case with the picket fence.

19th-century exterior changes have architectural significance in their own right. The addition of a second story to the the wing in the 1880s was accomplished with a careful continuation of the original Greek Revival features, while the front porch and side bay window are well-executed expressions of late-19th-century taste. Taken together, the alterations are also a fitting expression by their maker, George H. Nichols, of his prominence in the community.

Historical Note

The builder of the house, George Pickering Nichols (c.1796-1877), was a member of a family that settled early in Thompson and were prominent for generations in local and state civic affairs. His great-grandfather, Jonathan Nichols, came to the community in 1763. His grandfather, Elijah Nichols (1743-1839), acquired this property, part of a 180-acre farm, in 1816 and occupied an early-18th-century Colonial saltbox residence that stood nearby. (note #3) George Pickering Nichols was deeded the farm by his grandfather. When it passed to George Harrison Nichols (1837-1910) at his father George P.'s death in 1877, the farm had increased to 260 acres in size. (note #4)

The last Nichols family member to own the farm was in the next generation, John Monroe Nichols of Kansas City, MO, who sold it in 1941. After that date, the house was converted into two units, with numerous exterior and interior modifications, prior to its restoration by the present owners. A substantial portion of the original farm tract was taken by eminent domain for the path of Interstate 395, and the present owners acquired the house and 1.4 acres in 1980. (note #5)

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George Pickering Nichols and George Harrison Nichols occupied many positions of civic responsibility during their lifetimes. George P. represented Thompson in the state legislature during the 1851 session. He was also appointed a captain in the state militia and served for years as a steward and trustee of the local Methodist church.

George H. served two sessions (1881, 1883) in the legislature and as Thompson's first selectman. Besides increasing the family land holdings throughout Thompson to 700 acres and gaining recognition as a farmer and cattleman, George H. had extensive involvement in local business affairs. He was president at various times of the boards of several banks, including 15 years at the head of the Thompson Savings Bank. The incorporators of the Grosvenordale and Putnam electric street railway also elected him their first president.

Notes

1. The Nichols House was documented, on inventory form #348, in the Townwide Historical and Architectural Survey of Thompson, Connecticut (1986). Other Greek Revival houses with similar features include the Walter E. Bates House, c.1841, at 313 Route 193 in Thompson Hill.
2. The Greek Revival buildings in Thompson are concentrated in the village of Thompson Hill. See the Townwide Historical and Architectural Survey of Thompson, Connecticut (1986).
3. This building, which stood east of the Nichols House, was dismantled in the 1930s and moved to Bass Rocks, Gloucester, MA. (See 23 October 1980 letter referred to in note #1 under Item #7)
4. For the chain of title covering the Nichols family ownership of the property, consult land records in the Town Clerk's Office, Town of Thompson, for the following deeds (listed in chronological order by volume and page reference): v.3/p.446 (1801); v.7/p.14 (1816); v.8/p.114 (1820); v.15/p.85 (1834); v.5/p.334 (probate records, 1877); v.33/p.569 (1912); v.49/p.89 (1941).
5. See Fig. 2, the plot plan.

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George Pickering Nichols House
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Bibliography

Commemorative Biographical Record of Tolland and Windham Counties, Connecticut. Chicago: J.H. Beers & Company, 1903.

Gray, O.W., Surveyor. Atlas of Windham and Tolland Counties. Hartford: C.G. Keeney, 1869. (plate 13 shows home of "Capt. G. Nichols" at location of this house)

Larned, Ellen Douglas. Historic Gleanings in Windham County, Connecticut. Providence: Preston & Rounds, 1899.

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Hamlin, Talbot. Greek Revival Architecture in America. New York: Dover Publications, 1964 (reprint of 1944 publication).

Lincoln, Allen B. A Modern History of Windham County, Connecticut. (2 vols.) Chicago: S.J. Clarke Pub. Co., 1920.

McDonough, Mark. Townwide Historical and Architectural Survey of Thompson, Connecticut. Unpublished manuscript, 1986 (sponsored by Town of Thompson Small Cities Program and the Connecticut Historical Commission).

Town of Thompson, CT, Town Clerk's Office (land records for the George Pickering Nichols House)

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Register of Historic Places. Thompson Hill National Register Historic District. (documentation is on file at Connecticut Historical Commission).

Various letters from Margaret Nichols Simonds of Kansas City, MO, granddaughter of George Harrison Nichols, dated 11 October 1976, 23 October 1980, and 5 March 1981. (Copies in possession of present owners).

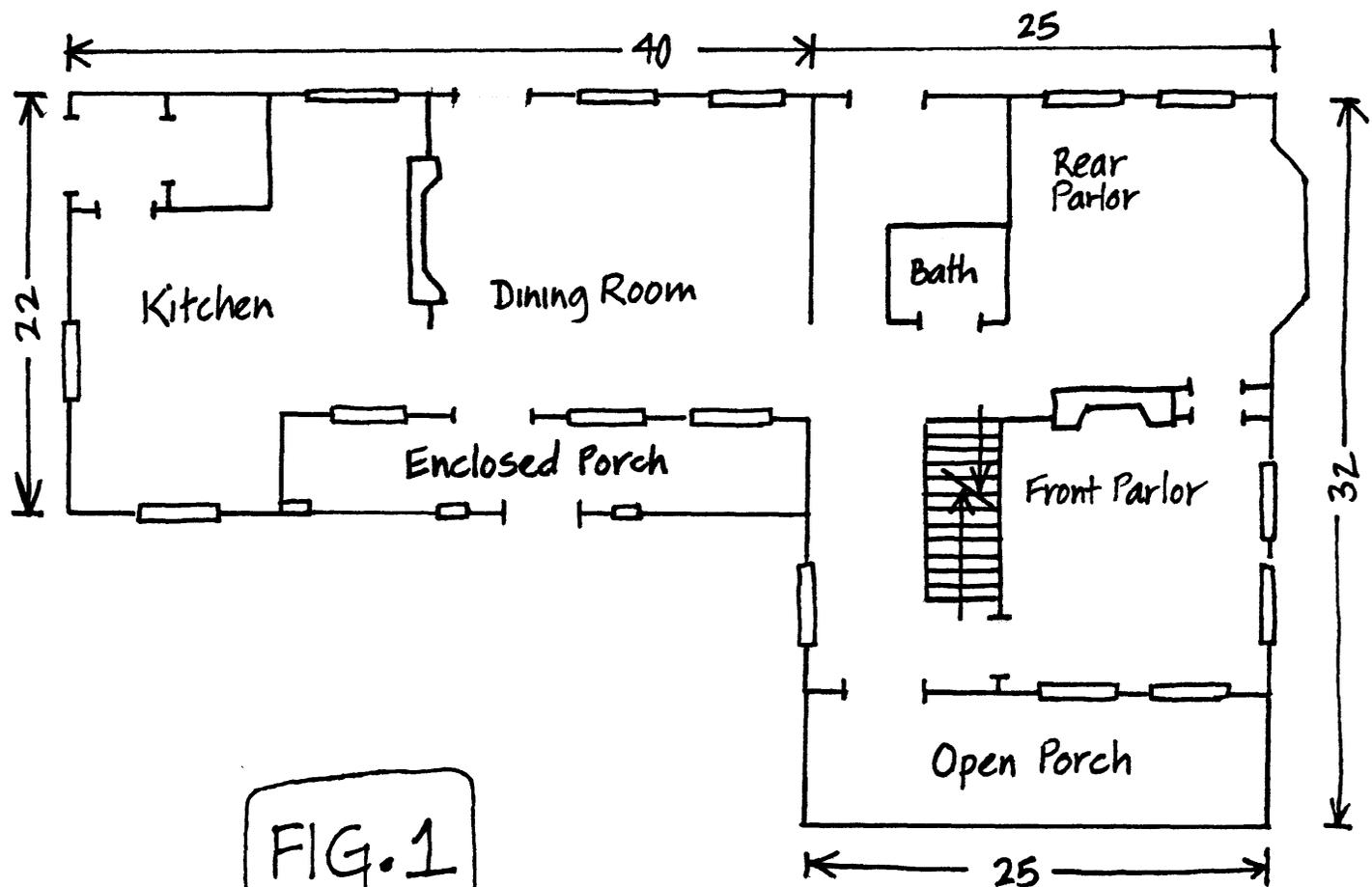


FIG. 1

The George Pickering Nichols House
 42 Thompson Road
 Thompson, CT

First Floor Layout
 Scale: 1" = 10 feet

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George Pickering Nichols House
Thompson, CTPhotographs

All photographs are of the George Pickering Nichols House, 42 Thompson Road, Thompson, CT 06239, and were taken by Gregory E. Andrews in October and November, 1990 (except where noted). Negatives for all the photographs are on file with the Connecticut Historical Commission, Hartford, CT.

<u>Number</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>View</u>
1	Facade (south elevation)	Northwest
2	c.1900 view of facade	North
2a	Facade	North
3	Streetscape	West
4	Facade	Northeast
5	Facade of main block	Northeast
6	East elevation	Northwest
7	North elevation	Southeast
8	Basement wall	East
9	Window in rear chamber of main block, first floor	North
10	Window in front chamber of main block, first floor	East
11	Door in front chamber of main block, first floor	West
12	Main stairway	North
13	Front door	South
14	Attic framing	East
15	Fireplace in front chamber of main block, first floor	North