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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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NATIONAL REGISTER

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Jenks Tavern

other names/site number East Rupert Hotel, Hotel G. Jenks

2. Location

street & number Dorset West Road N/A not for publication

city or town Rupert N/A vicinity

state Vermont code VT county Bennington code 003 zip code 05768

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 2/3/94
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Vermont State Historic Preservation Office
State of Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

for Signature of the Keeper Entered in the National Register Date of Action
[Signature] 3/17/94

Jenks Tavern
Name of Property

Bennington County, VT
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Hotel

Commerce/Restaurant

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Federal

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation granite

walls weatherboard

roof slate

other brick

wood

Narrative Description

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

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Section number 7 Page 1 Jenks Tavern, Bennington Cty. Vt.

Narrative Description

Jenks Tavern is a 2-1/2 story Federal-style building with upper and lower front porches typical of many early 19th century inns found in Vermont and New York State. The building has blue-painted weatherboard siding and a slate roof. It is located at the head of the Mettawee Valley at the junction of Routes 30, 315 and Dorset West Road in the small hamlet of East Rupert. The tavern faces west on Dorset West Road on an irregularly-shaped half-acre lot. A barn of later vintage is attached to its northeast corner, providing a two-car garage and workshop. The property is landscaped with large sugar maple trees, crab apple trees and mountain honeysuckle.

When the existing structure was built in the early 1800s it was attached to the west end of a 1½-story dwelling that, according to tradition, was the original tavern. This older building was on the property in 1804, facing south on a road that was vacated in 1948 when state Route 30 was realigned across the rear of the original five-acre tavern property. A c.1870 photograph shows the original building still attached to the rear of the surviving structure at its southeast corner. It was detached and moved toward the back of the property, in bad repair, prior to 1900 and was apparently one of two structures being used as barns that were razed when the highway was realigned. These two buildings are shown on a state highway survey of the project.

The existing inn is 39 feet wide, 37 feet deep and three stories high with gable ends. The first and second floors are three-bay construction with a center hall on each floor. The third floor is a ballroom 15½ feet wide and 38 feet long, parallel to the front of the structure.

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BASEMENT--The existing inn was built on a stone foundation averaging eighteen inches thick. Under the rear half of the main building is a seven-foot-deep cellar with access to crawl space under the front. During restorations in this century, the full cellar was floored with pea gravel with poured concrete pads supporting the forced hot air furnace, water pump and storage tank, and the hot water heater.

Access to the cellar is a staircase from the kitchen. There is no evidence in the cellar, or elsewhere, that there ever were fireplaces, the two original chimneys serving wood stoves that came into use late in the 18th century. An inventory of George Jenks' estate in 1873 lists seven iron stoves. (When Freeman and Harris bought the tavern in 1811, there was a \$2100 mortgage with the first \$400 payment to be made in "furniseware at the furnise price," suggesting that the buyers had an interest in one of the early furnaces in Bennington or Rutland County.) None of the stoves remained when the 1957 restoration was undertaken and the two enclosed chimneys were in bad repair and had to be replaced.

Trees with much of the bark still on provide the first floor joists (and also some of the roof rafters) though large hewn timbers were used as sill plates.

FIRST FLOOR--The eight-foot center hall includes the main staircase to the second floor, with a coat closet beneath the stairs. A doorway to the right leads to the former taproom, now a library with a corner fireplace. Horizontal board paneling with a quarter-inch bead molding is topped by a chair rail around the room. The paneling was duplicated vertically over the fireplace, erected in 1958 and trimmed with a Vermont slate mantel and hearth. The library is 14 by 16 feet.

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A hall doorway at the left leads into the parlor, 15-foot square, and with a chair rail matching those in the library and center hall. Through an open archway behind the parlor is a dining room 10 x 15 feet created about 1973 by combining a small bedroom with a pantry off the kitchen, which lies behind the center hall. A former storeroom on the south side of the kitchen was converted to a full bathroom and laundry unit during the first major restoration of the inn in 1957-59 by Mr. and Mrs. Herman Ruegger.

Original random-width hard pine flooring is present in the hall, kitchen, dining room and parlor. A later wide-board floor was laid over badly worn flooring in the former taproom during restoration. Post and beam framing was used in original construction and some beams are exposed in the kitchen ceiling. The kitchen is 13 by 17 feet.

The original windows throughout the inn appear to have been the 12/12 type shown in the c.1870 photo. In the later 1800s, these were replaced on the first floor with 2/2 sash during a Victorian remodeling project. When the major restoration took place in 1957-59, 12/12 sash with weights, closely matching the original windows on the second floor, were returned to the first floor rooms.

The 1½-story barn, approximately 18 by 37 feet, that was attached to the northeast corner of the inn in the late 19th century may have been moved from the inn barnyard across Dorset West Road. As a wing of the main building it provided a stable, summer kitchen and indoor privy. Access to the wing is from a doorway in the kitchen and prior to the 1957-59 remodeling there was a pass-through window from the summer kitchen into the pantry (now part of the dining room).

The stable area was converted to a two-car garage (lengthened by four feet as automobiles became longer). The summer kitchen now serves as a workshop. A loft in this wing is used for storage. Exposed, rough-sawn planking in the garage area all was cut by circular saw, indicating the wing dates from after the mid-1800s.

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SECOND FLOOR--The center hall extends for the entire depth of the building with a window at the back and a doorway to the upper front porch. The doorway was installed in the 1957-58 restoration, both earlier photos showing a window at that location and no regular access to the upper porch.

At the rear of the hall is a staircase to the third floor ballroom. The exposed stringer supporting the steps is decorated with applied scrollwork and the steps themselves have applied moldings on the ends and front edges of the treads. The balusters are square and at the top of the steps, an original batten door of bead-molded planks leads into the ballroom.

Originally there were front and rear bedrooms on each side of the hallway. A back staircase from the kitchen came into the upper hall in a back corner of the rear, south bedroom.

In the Ruegger restoration, changes were made to provide closet space and one bathroom upstairs. The rear north bedroom was shortened three feet to provide two closets, one for each bedroom on that side of the house. On the south side, the front bedroom was shortened to provide three more closets. The rear south bedroom then was converted to a bathroom.

Additional work by the Danforths between 1972 and 1974 utilized the back stairwell for a second small bathroom with access from the hall for guests in the north bedrooms. The original bathroom then was modified to provide a bath and dressing room for the master bedroom on the south front.

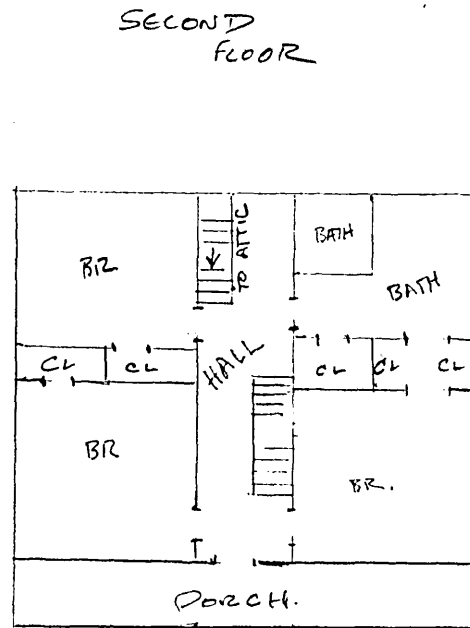
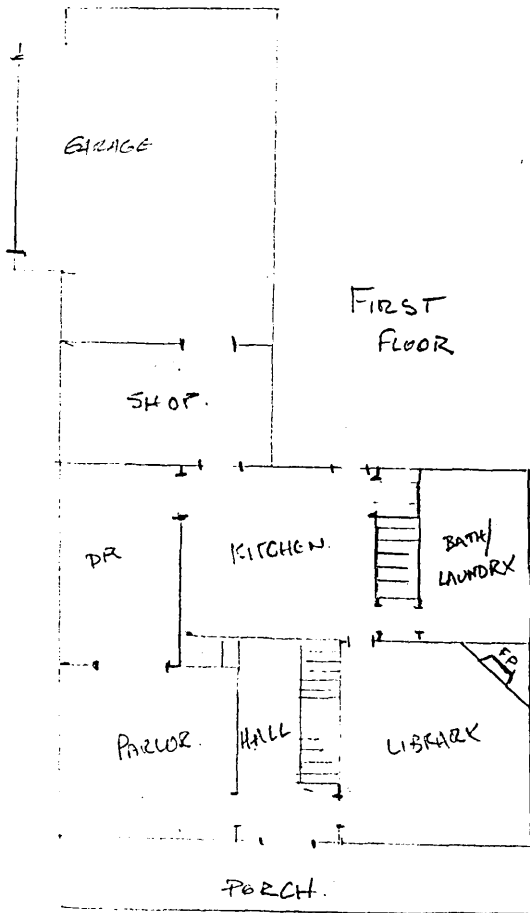
The four original bedroom doors, each with six recessed panels beaded on the backs, remain in the hall in their original door frames.

Original pine floors with widths up to 18 inches are intact throughout the second floor.

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FLOOR PLAN
OF JENKS TAVERN
EAST RUPERT, VT.

1" = 16'

(DIMENSIONS APPROXIMATE)

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THIRD FLOOR--The ballroom, that extends the entire width of the inn, has two 12/8 windows at each end and narrow benches along each long wall. Bookcases and a storage closet were installed at the north end of the east wall during one later restoration project.

The "spring floor" built especially for dancing, with floorboards slightly arched at the middle, still is in good condition.

The c.1870 photo shows the inn with a wood shingle roof, no shutters and a vestibule at the south end of the lower porch enclosing a separate entrance to the taproom. A photo from 1928, when the inn still was occupied by George Jenks' daughter, Georgia, and her husband Wallace Towsley, shows a slate roof in place, the taproom vestibule gone (though the door still was there) and still no shutters, which were added sometime before the 1957-59 restoration.

Siding on the structure appears to be unpainted in the earliest photo but in the 1928 picture, exterior walls appear a dark color--perhaps blue--with white trim. From 1959 to 1972, the tavern was white with green shutters and in subsequent years a colonial blue with white trim.

An interior door frame of the earliest type found in the inn had been stored in the loft of the garage wing and scraping revealed five layers of paint, the earliest red, then dark green, cream, light gray and finally white.

The Victorian remodeling carried out during the Jenks/Towsley ownership prior to 1900 involved only the first floor. When the windows were replaced with 2/2 sash, window and door casings were replaced with trim with bullseye corners in the parlor, taproom and part of the kitchen.

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It was probably at this time that the old original dwelling, said to have been the first tavern, was detached from the southeast corner of the inn, moved toward the rear of the property, and replaced with a barn attached to the northeast corner.

The c.1870 photo shows that the original dwelling, across the front, had two doors and four windows facing south. Other details are unclear in the picture.

Sometime prior to 1928, railings were installed on the tavern's lower porch and railings on both porches then enclosed with weatherboards.

The Ruegger restoration of the inn for use as a seasonal home began in 1957. The building was in a bad state of repair and without plumbing, heating and electrical service. The work was carried out by local craftsmen under the direction of Webster Wilkins. Using the earliest photo of the house for guidance, they returned it as closely as possible to its original appearance as an inn.

Some additional changes, already described, were carried out by Mr. and Mrs. Danforth, who acquired the property from the Rueggers in 1972 and kept it for two years. No other major changes have been made since that time.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

c. 1807

Significant Dates

c. 1807

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

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Section number 8 Page 1 Jenks Tavern
Rupert, Bennington County, Vermont

The old tavern in East Rupert that in the late 19th century came to be called Jenks Tavern was probably built c.1807 by James Moore, Jr. It is a good example of an early Vermont tavern building. A 2 1/2 story structure, it is particularly notable for its recessed two story porch and the third floor ballroom with a spring floor for ideal dancing. Taverns were important places in Vermont, providing food and lodging to travelers on major routes and serving as community centers for a variety of public and private gatherings. James Moore bought this parcel of land and small tavern already operating here three months after the completion of the twelve mile long Rupert Turnpike running from Pawlet, Vermont, to Salem, New York, that Moore and three associates financed. Moore saw the opportunity to capitalize on the new road by adding this large tavern to the front of the already existing tavern (later removed).

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The Town of Rupert was established Aug. 20, 1761 as one of the New Hampshire grants made by Gov. Benning Wentworth to family members, friends and other land speculators. But it was not until 1765 that these original proprietors met in Bennington to establish a town government. One of the first orders of business was to plan a division of the 23,040 acres in Rupert so that the 68 proprietors could begin selling the lands to settlers.

Governor Wentworth had directed that Rupert be set up "six miles square" and the First Division of 50-acre sites by the proprietors took place in 1767 along the Pawlet (now Mettowee) River. It was here that the first settlement was established in the area named East Rupert. It adjoined the Town of Dorset to the east, which had been chartered by Wentworth the same day.

Nearly 40 years later, the inn that is the subject of this nomination was established to serve the growing community and, more importantly, to serve the increasing number of stagecoach travelers on the Rupert Turnpike.

One of the first settlers of East Rupert was Reuben Harmon, whose son Reuben Jr. was to establish the Harmon Mint nearby in 1785 to make copper coins for the independent state of Vermont, not yet admitted to the Union. Another member of the family, Enos Harmon (a town selectman in 1789), was the owner in 1800 of "part of Lot 6 in the First Division," that was to become the site of the East Rupert tavern in 1804.

Cyrus Edwards bought the property from Enos Harmon in 1800 and when he sold it four years later to Elisha Sears, deed boundaries mentioned the river, the schoolhouse and the "dwelling house."

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Rupert School No. 1 was built on the property about 1796, according to Hibbard, and may have been a log cabin. Maps of 1856 and 1869 show it directly opposite the east end of Rupert Mountain Road. About 1870, it was replaced by a frame one-room school built about fifty feet closer to the inn than the original schoolhouse, according to a State Highway survey of the Route 30 realignment in 1948. At that time the school was moved across the river and converted to a house on the east side of the highway where it still is in use.

The original dwelling house on the property, first mentioned in the May 1, 1804, deed from Cyrus Edwards to Elisha Sears, probably was built by Edwards who had acquired the lot in 1800 for \$28.12 and sold it to Sears four years later for \$600.

Sears assembled the tavern site by buying 3½ acres on the north side for \$75 in 1803, then the adjoining tavern parcel (a 1.125 acre lot with dwelling) in 1804 for \$600 and finally, in 1805, he bought a lot 66 by 100 feet directly across the street for \$9 (later referred to as the "barnyard.")

The boundary of the barn lot began "at Elisha Sears signpost in the west line of the highway," suggesting that he was the first tavern keeper in 1805 or slightly earlier. In 1825 a deed referred to "Freeman's and Harris' signpost" while they kept the inn, and still later deeds mention "where the signpost formerly stood."*

The surviving building, subject of this nomination, was probably erected by James Moore Jr., who acquired the site in 1807 from Sears for \$1,300 and sold it in 1811 to Freeman and Harris for \$2,100. There were only slight variations in the price of the property in sales during the next 25 years.

James Moore Jr. was the eldest son of James Moore who conducted an inn on the west side of Rupert Mountain until he was killed by a falling tree in 1800.

*Every public house was required to display a sign bearing the innkeeper's name. Vermont Statutes, Chapter 70, 1798.

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James Jr. was born in 1759 and his father moved most of his family to Rupert from near Suffield, Ct. in 1780. James and his brother Grove, two years younger, helped their father in 1786 when he built a 2½-story frame house to replace his original cabin at the west foot of Rupert Mountain. On the second floor of an ell was a 20-by-35-foot hall that served as a ballroom and the town hall for more than half a century. By 1787, the father had obtained a tavern license.

By the time their father died, James Jr. and Grove had already moved to the east side of town along the Mettowee River and their younger brother Seth took over the old Moore Inn.

James Jr. had taken the Freeman's Oath Dec. 30, 1794, three years after Vermont became the 14th state in the union. Four years later he was appointed a surveyor of highways in Rupert.

Rupert residents had been debating construction of a town turnpike since the first one was built in the state several years earlier. Finally, four of the most prosperous men in the community decided to undertake the risk. A town record of May 31, 1806, reveals that the previous session of the Legislature authorized the four men to build the Rupert Turnpike: they were Dr. Josiah Graves, town clerk; David Sheldon Esq., justice of the peace and town treasurer for nearly 40 years; James Moore Jr. and Lyman Dewey.

Work started at once on the turnpike, beginning at the Pawlet town line on what now is Route 30, following the old road to East Rupert and then extending southwesterly over Rupert Mountain Road through Rupert and West Rupert to the New York State line at Salem.

The project principally involved widening and improving old roads the Turnpike would follow for a distance of nearly twelve miles. A four-rod (66-foot) right-of-way was established though the actual roadway was only about 25 feet in width. By November 1806, work had been completed under the personal supervision of the four sponsors.

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They estimated the work had cost \$600 a mile or a total of about \$7,000. The Legislature authorized them to recover their expenses plus a profit of ten percent by the collection of tolls. (It was to be 60 years before the toll road was replaced by an improved public road.)

Three months after the turnpike opened, Moore on Feb. 7, 1807, bought Sears' three-parcel tavern site plus an additional 30 acres he had acquired nearby in Dorset. The tavern site was on the east side of the new Turnpike. Moore paid \$1,300.

Exactly one month after he bought the property, Moore obtained a tavern license and he continued to renew it through 1813.

A mid-19th century Bennington newspaper article quoted by Ruth Rasey Simpson in "Hand-Hewn in Old Vermont" relates that on July 4, 1809, two years after Moore acquired the property, an assemblage of men and women from Dorset, Manchester, Rupert and Pawlet met at the tavern and then marched to a nearby grove for an Independence Day celebration.

Col. Stephen Martindale of Dorset was marshal for the day and innkeeper Moore was assistant marshal. Martindale was a Revolutionary War veteran as were some twenty other men who took part. It is not known whether Moore had served in the war but he may have since he was 17 when it started.

According to local tradition, the original tavern opened in the old dwelling house first mentioned in the 1804 deed. And there is strong indication that Moore was the tavern owner who erected the surviving three-story inn that originally was attached to the west end of the house. The house is shown in the c.1870 photograph of the inn and it was not detached until shortly before 1900 after it had fallen into disrepair. It then was moved toward the back of the property and apparently used as a barn.

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Moore had paid \$1300 when he bought the four parcels of land from Sears in 1807. Only four years later he sold the same property for \$2,100 to Jedediah Freeman and Jesse Harris of Dorset. The \$800 price difference would probably have covered the cost of the new inn attached to the original building. (The even larger inn he helped his father build some 22 years earlier had cost \$675, according to early records cited in "Hand-Hewn in Old Vermont.")

Moore gave Freeman and Harris a mortgage for the full purchase price of the property and he may have continued to run the inn until 1813 since he renewed his tavern licenses until then. Freeman and Harris agreed to make an initial payment within 30 days of \$400 "in furniseware at the furnise price," suggesting that they may have had a connection with one of the ironworks then operating in Bennington and Rutland counties.

The year he sold the inn, Moore bought two nearby farms totaling 255 acres for a total of \$3,800, indicating he was relatively wealthy. And only a few years later he moved to Albany.

Freeman and Harris also received a tavern license a month after buying the inn. They did not renew it in 1812 but from 1813 to 1822 or later, Freeman alone was the licensed innkeeper. Town records used the words tavern keeper and innkeeper interchangeably.

The inn certainly benefited from stagecoach traffic using the Rupert Turnpike north through Pawlet to Granville, N.Y., and Lake Champlain, and west--from East Rupert--to Salem, N.Y. The stage to Salem made the trip from Manchester twice a week in each direction.

Freeman kept the inn until 1829. It then changed hands three times in four years, with none of the owners known to be innkeepers. Abel Haskins of Danby, who bought the property in 1833, may have run the tavern and then, in 1837, he sold the property to his son-in-law, George Jenks, who also was from Danby. Jenks' father, Nicholas, ran two different taverns in Danby between 1810 and 1826, and there George learned the business.

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For nearly a century-and-a-half the property has been referred to locally as Jenks' Tavern, Jenks' Hotel, or the East Rupert Hotel. Jenks was the last of the East Rupert tavern keepers for in 1872, the year before he died, Rupert voted to "go dry."

The 1873 inventory of Jenks' estate listed bedding and eight bedsteads, adequate for a good sized stagecoach inn. But there was no bar equipment or stock, indicating Jenks had disposed of it the previous year or even earlier.

Jenks' widow, Phebe, operated the property as a hotel or boarding house until her death in 1891 and this operation was continued by her daughter, Georgia, and her husband, Wallace Towsley. Mostly summer guests stayed at the inn in this century until about 1930.

For over a century the inn stood on a corner since the Pawlet Road (now Route 30) at that time diverged from West Road between the tavern and the Harmon/Danforth house some 75 feet to the south. In 1948 the state bought a right-of-way across the inn property and realigned Route 30 behind the inn, vacating the old roadway between the inn and the adjoining house.

The inn was, and is, known far and wide for its big third floor ballroom. The "spring floor" built specially for dancing still is in good condition and during the 1957-58 restoration, insulation was installed around the ballroom under the eaves of the inn, and two wrought-iron chandeliers were hung at opposite ends. Old-time residents of the area still recall the dances there..

From 1859 to 1872 town meetings were held in the ballroom and part of that time George Jenks was a selectman for Rupert. Parties and other social gatherings also took place in the old ballroom.

Inns and taverns were important in the 18th and 19th centuries--and not just for the products dispensed.

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Jenks Tavern
Bennington Cty., Vt.

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Though there were numerous inns in southern Vermont in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, only a handful have survived and most of these have been converted to other uses. The old East Rupert tavern--subject of this nomination--has been a private residence since the 1930s except for a number of years it stood vacant before being restored in the late 1950s.

Except for careful restoration, its appearance today is virtually unchanged from the way it looked in a c.1870 photo, a copy of which accompanies the nomination. This, plus the architectural factors related below in detail and other specifics discussed in Section 7, warrant inclusion of the building on the National Register as a fine example of an early tavern.

Although not as large, the East Rupert inn resembles Bump Tavern, built about 1800 in Ashland, N.Y., some 100 miles southwest of East Rupert. That was moved about fifty years ago to Cooperstown, N.Y., and restored as part of the Farmers Museum Village. Bump Tavern also has a two-story front porch (though more ornate), a lower wing at the rear and almost identical fenestration in the main block of the tavern.

Two-story front porches were a popular feature of many early inns in Vermont and New York State. The roof-line on the East Rupert inn confirms that this feature was original and not a later addition, as often was the case.

The following inns illustrated in Wriston's "Vermont Inns and Taverns" show the dual porches as original to the buildings:

- 1828 Simonsville Inn (later Rowell's Inn) in Andover, Windham County.
- 1832 Caspian Lake House, Greensboro, Orleans County.
- 1849 Avon House, East Berkshire, Washington County.
- 1869 Springfield House, Windsor County.

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Pictures of several other inns show the porches as later additions, with separate roofs:

1820 John Buckmaster Tavern, Shrewsbury, Rutland County.

c.1840 Kelly Stand, Sunderland, Bennington County.

1881 Bayside Inn, East Alburg, Grand Isle County.

A number of other early taverns operated in the Town of Rupert but the only survivor seems to be that built by James Moore Sr. in 1786 some three miles from East Rupert on the west slope of Rupert Mountain. It served as an inn for more than 60 years and was restored and has been used as a residence since the 1930s.

Moore built a large, handsome farmhouse but then apparently decided to become an innkeeper and added a rear wing with a large second floor hall used for more than half a century for town meetings and social events.

His son, James Moore Jr., helped build his father's stand but soon after moved to East Rupert. In 1807 he bought the small tavern established several years earlier by Elisha Sears and then added the large existing section to accommodate stage-coach traffic on the newly opened Rupert Turnpike, that Moore helped finance.

Other Rupert innkeepers are recalled only by the tavern licenses "approved" for them by the town fathers, and by references in other town records.

A number of early taverns served the adjoining town of Dorset and some buildings still are standing. The Dorset Inn in Dorset Village (first called the George Washington Tavern) was built c.1796 but probably not used as an inn until John Gray's Tavern across the street (also c.1796) ceased operations sometime after 1822. The Gray Tavern now is the Dorset Village Public Library. The Dorset Inn still is receiving guests.

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The noted Cephas Kent Tavern on Dorset West Road, some three miles south of the East Rupert inn, was the site of the four Dorset Conventions of 1775 and 1776 that helped establish the Republic of Vermont, later to acquire statehood. Its actual location, if it still exists, has been in dispute for some 75 years.

The "spring dance floor" on the third floor of the East Rupert inn is further evidence that it was designed as an inn. Such dance floors were featured attractions in a number of other early Vermont inns. The floorboards were slightly arched to cushion the gyrations of the dancers. Wriston's book, previously mentioned, lists the following inns with spring dance floors and probably there were more:

The Tim Collins Tavern at "Leading Center in Windsor County "had a floating dance floor which would spring with the rhythms of the dance." 1861 or earlier.

The Jamaica House, c.1814, in Windham County had what one writer called a "flexible dance floor."

Others with spring floors were:

1807 Pavilion Hotel, Hartland, Windsor County.

1814 Simeon Evans Tavern, Cambridgeport, Windham County, razed 1949.

1842 Green Mountain House, Ludlow, Windsor County.

1870 Frontier Hotel, North Troy, Orleans County, burned in 1918.

The East Rupert inn is said to have been called the Dove and Cup at some time prior to its purchase by George Jenks in 1837. According to Mrs. Anne Ruegger, who directed restoration of the building in the late 1950s, that name was mentioned to a prior owner, Milton Peterson, over half a century ago by a nonagenarian native of East Rupert. It does not appear, however, in any of the several local histories nor in any of the town records examined during research.

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Before public buildings were available, courts were held, town meetings took place and polling places were set up in the most convenient inns and taverns. And they also were centers of information. Recent newspapers were available to patrons and legal notices of auctions and property sales were posted there, and sometimes the sales took place on the premises.

Inns and taverns were centers of information where local residents debated the issues of the day and gained news from afar from stage drivers and passengers.

Nearly every major crossroads or small settlement seems to have had an inn, providing refreshments and entertainment for locals and lodging for travelers. And for all their shortcomings, a swinging candle lantern outside an inn was a welcome sight to a weary traveler who had spent the day slogging through the mud and ruts, or drifting snow of rural Vermont.

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Property Ownership

Deeds	Owners	Dates
Book 7, pg. 127	Cyrus Edwards	1800-1804
Book 7, pg. 178	Elisha Sears	1804-1807
" 8, " 242	*James Moore Jr.	1807-1811
" 9, " 232	*Jedediah Freeman/Jesse Harris	1811-1829
" 12, " 103	James Dougrey	1829
" 12, " 284	Orville Thompson	1829-1831
" 12, " 286	Dorson Eastman	1831-1833
" 12, " 405	Abel Haskins	1833-1837
" 13, " 151	*George Jenks & Family	1837-1944
" 27, " 237	Milton Peterson	1944-1957
" 30, " 328	Herman & Anne Ruegger	1957-1972
" 33, " 549	Ethel & J.D. Danforth	1972-1974
" 34, " 141	Lucille Beach	1974-1991
" 42, " 508	Zeau C. DuBois/Brown	1991-

*Known tavern/inn license holders.

Early Tavern-Innkeeper Licenses

Rupert Town Clerk

James Moore Jr.	1807-10, 1812-13
Jedediah Freeman	1811, 1813, 1814-17, 1819

Vermont State Archives

Jedediah Freeman	1822
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Verbal Boundary Description

Town of Rupert land records, Book 34, page 141 (Aug. 1,1974)

Commencing at a point in the westerly line of Route 30, at a corner of lands conveyed to the State of Vermont for highway purposes, said point being located 33 feet westerly from Station 434 of the established center line of Vermont highway project F 154 (3), and being the northeasterly corner of the parcel herein conveyed:

Thence running southerly parallel with the said established center line 117 feet to the building on the parcel herein conveyed;

Thence running Easterly along the northerly side of said building 12 feet to its northeasterly corner;

Thence running southerly along the easterly side of said building 17 feet;

Thence running southeasterly parallel with said center line 53 feet, more or less, to the northeasterly boundary of the old main highway;

Thence running in a northwesterly direction along the main highway to the easterly line of the West Road and thence running northerly along the easterly line of West Road to a corner of the lands of the State of Vermont:

And thence running easterly along said lands of the State of Vermont 44 feet to the point of beginning.

This is a roughly triangular tract bounded on the East by Route 30, on the North by State Highway property, on the West by Dorset West Road and on the south by the residence property of Robert Weiss. About $\frac{1}{2}$ -acre in size, it is all that remains of the original 5-acre tavern site. It is sufficient to convey the significance of the property.

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JENKS TAVERN Bennington Cty., Vt.

Section number 12 Page 1 PHOTOGRAPH LABELS

Photographer: J. S. Brown
Photos taken in October 1992
Negatives at Vermont Division of Historic Preservation

- No. 1 View to southeast, Dorset West Road, East Rupert in foreground.
- No. 2 View to northeast, Dorset West Road, East Rupert in foreground.
- No. 3 View to south, showing later wing. Vermont Route 30 is to the left.
- No. 4 Copy of c.1870 photo of Jenks Tavern; persons unidentified. Shows early dwelling attached at right rear and vestibule around separate taproom entrance on front porch.