

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only
received SEP 30 1980
date entered NOV 25 1980

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Dibley House

and/or common Graf House

2. Location

street & number 331 Eighth Avenue South ___ not for publication

city, town Fargo ___ vicinity of congressional district

state North Dakota code 38 county Cass code 017

3. Classification

Category ___ district <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) ___ structure ___ site ___ object	Ownership ___ public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private ___ both Public Acquisition ___ in process ___ being considered	Status <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied ___ unoccupied ___ work in progress Accessible <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted ___ yes: unrestricted ___ no	Present Use ___ agriculture ___ commercial ___ educational ___ entertainment ___ government ___ industrial ___ military	___ museum ___ park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence ___ religious ___ scientific ___ transportation ___ other:
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4. Owner of Property

name Neil S. Graf

street & number 331 Eighth Avenue South

city, town Fargo ___ vicinity of state North Dakota

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Cass County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Fargo state North Dakota

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes ___ no

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Dibley House, constructed in 1906, is situated on the north side of eighth avenue south in Fargo. Commanding an excellent view of the Red River from its wrap-around porch, it exhibits a blend of the Classic Revival and Colonial Revival styles of architecture, as was common at the turn of the century.

Constructed of wood, the two-and-one-half story structure rises from a foundation of concrete block, the rough texture of which was intended to simulate stone. This too, was popular at the time. The main portion of the Dibley House is enclosed by a steep hipped roof which is penetrated on the East, South, and West by hipped dormers to allow light in at the third level. Beneath this roof are the portions of the house intended for occupation by the owner. On the west end of the structure, a lower, gabled roof emerges to the north. This roof extends out over the kitchen and the servants' quarters above, visually separating them from the rest of the house. On the first floor a large front porch extends around the east side of the home and was originally asymmetrically balanced, as was common to the style, by a small sitting room to the west of the entry. In 1926, the small sitting room was removed and a larger room was added. The addition is relatively unobtrusive, however, sensitive to the original detail of the home. Many other exterior features of the Dibley home reflect its Classical/Colonial Revival style. They include the white painted lap siding, the multiple upper lite over the single lower lite window sash configuration, the straight wood window heads and the Greek columns.

Entering the house through the front porch, one is admitted to a large central foyer, impressively finished with a hardwood floor of oak, rich wood wainscoting, and numerous moldings. To the right is the living room, access to which is gained through a wide opening that incorporates additional Classical columns. Here, leaded glass windows, ceiling beams, light fixtures, a fireplace and numerous built-ins all remain as they did in 1906. To the left one either enters a large coat closet, the added sitting room, or the dining room. In the sitting room, the sensitivity to original detail has been carried through to the inside. Behind it, in the oval shaped dining room, floors, trim, leaded glass and built-ins similar to those in the living room unify the house. Finally, in the rear, is the kitchen.

Utilizing a grand stair in the foyer, one ascends to the second level. Straight ahead is a study, jutting out in bay-window fashion over the porch, and graced by richly finished cabinets and a fireplace. Accessed by a rear stair as well, the second floor also accommodates three bedrooms, a bath and a servants' quarters. Continuing up, the rear stair enables one to reach the third level, where a large room under the eaves is finished throughout with tongue-in-groove boards. Clearly, few changes have been made to the Dibley House over the years. The interior and exterior, as well as the grounds and a large wood carriage house in the rear all remain in excellent condition, much as Dibley had known them.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1906 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The significance of the Dibley House is derived from its distinct architectural qualities and from the close association of its builder with the history of the area and the state. As an excellent example of the Classical/Colonial Revival style its appearance remains much the same as it did in 1906, the year it was built. A grand old home, it exemplifies the successes achieved by pioneers in the Red River Valley who were willing to work hard to address the needs of the region with services, political leadership and community involvement.

Francis E. Dibley, builder of the home, was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in 1860. After completing his education, in 1879, he moved to the Red River Valley, finding employment with the St. Paul and Pacific Railway in Ada Minnesota. The next year he entered the services of a grain farm near Sabin, Minnesota, serving in the capacity of foreman until 1889 when he became a representative of a bridge and iron company, located in Milwaukee. In 1898 he formed the partnership of "Dibley and Robinson, Bridge and Structural Builders" of Fargo, North Dakota, and in 1902 he organized "The Fargo Bridge and Iron Company, of which he served as president. His interest in the growing business of transportation is further indicated by his role as president of North Dakota Improvement Company. Exhibiting diversity in his career, Dibley also served as president of the Fargo Bond Company and developed extensive farming and mercantile interests as well.

Achieving business prominence, Dibley also became known in civic and political circles. He was a Mason, a Shriner, and a member of the local Elks. Active in the Fargo Baptist Church, Dibley served on the building committee that erected a new church in 1905. The next year, in 1906, Dibley was elected as a member of the North Dakota House of Representatives. Not surprisingly, at least one bill he introduced dealt with road improvements throughout the state.

Also in 1906, Dibley constructed his eighth avenue home. Although he and his wife Ida had no children, the home was of a size and style befitting a man of his stature in the community. Four years later a stroke prompted Dibley's untimely death. His widow sold the home a few years later and since then it has been occupied by a number of families. The home remains today as a reminder of early businessmen and community leaders who sought their fortunes in the infant state.

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

~~UTM NOT VERIFIED~~ ~~ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED~~

Acreege of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Fargo South

Quadrangle scale 7.5'

UMT References

A

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

B

Zone				Easting				Northing						

C

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D

Zone				Easting				Northing						

E

Zone				Easting				Northing						

F

Zone				Easting				Northing						

G

Zone				Easting				Northing						

H

Zone				Easting				Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification

Lot 16, block 3, of Island Park addition to Fargo.

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

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Steven C. Johnson

organization

date 28 June, 1980

street & number 505 Seventh Avenue North #9

telephone 701-237-6483

city or town Fargo

state North Dakota

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title ND State Historic Preservation Officer

date September 24, 1980

For HCRS use only

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

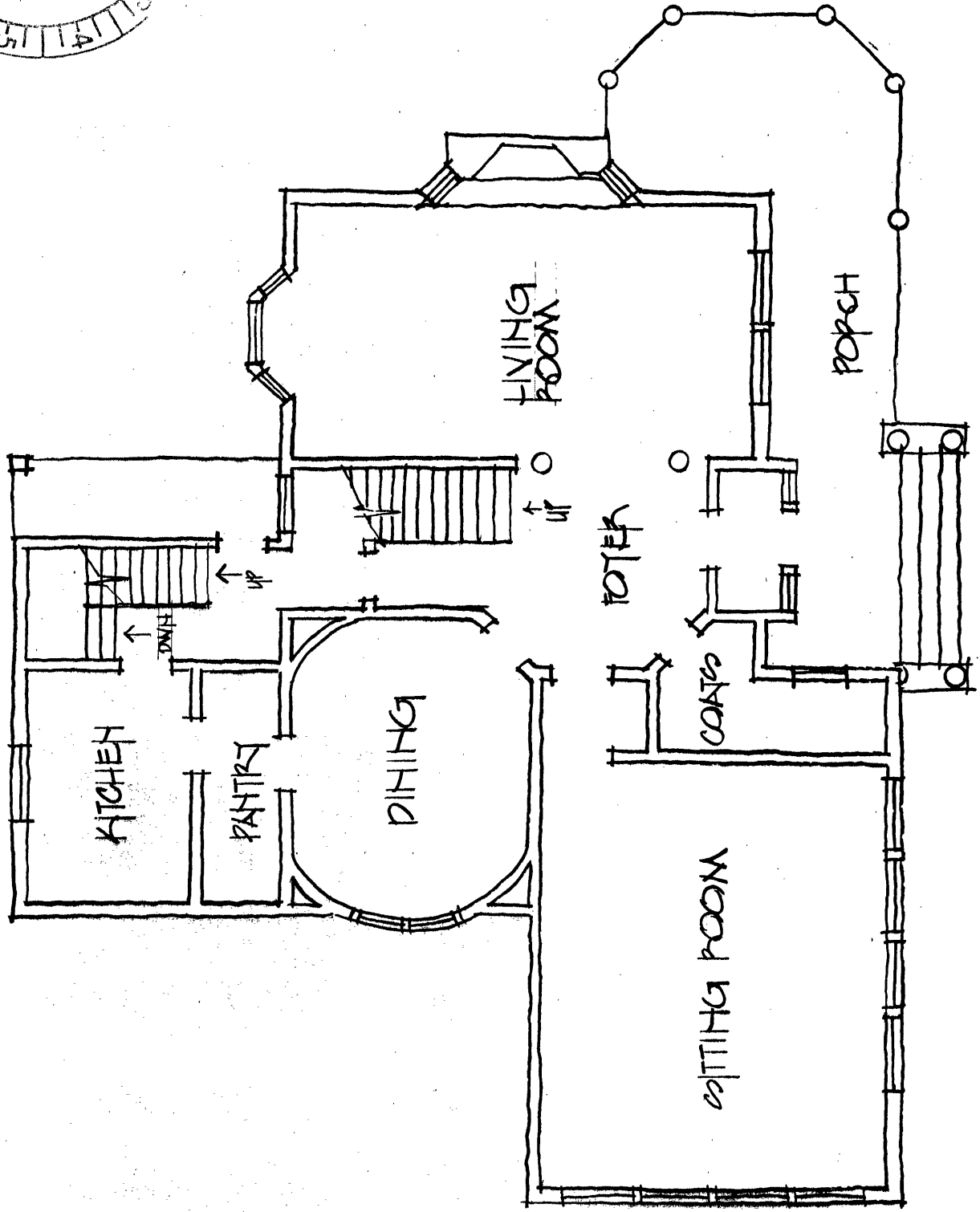
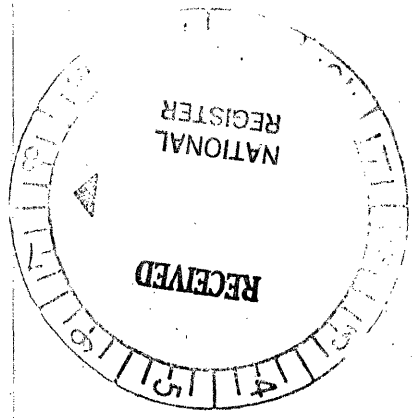
Keeper of the National Register

date 11/25/80

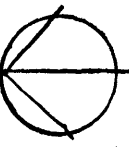
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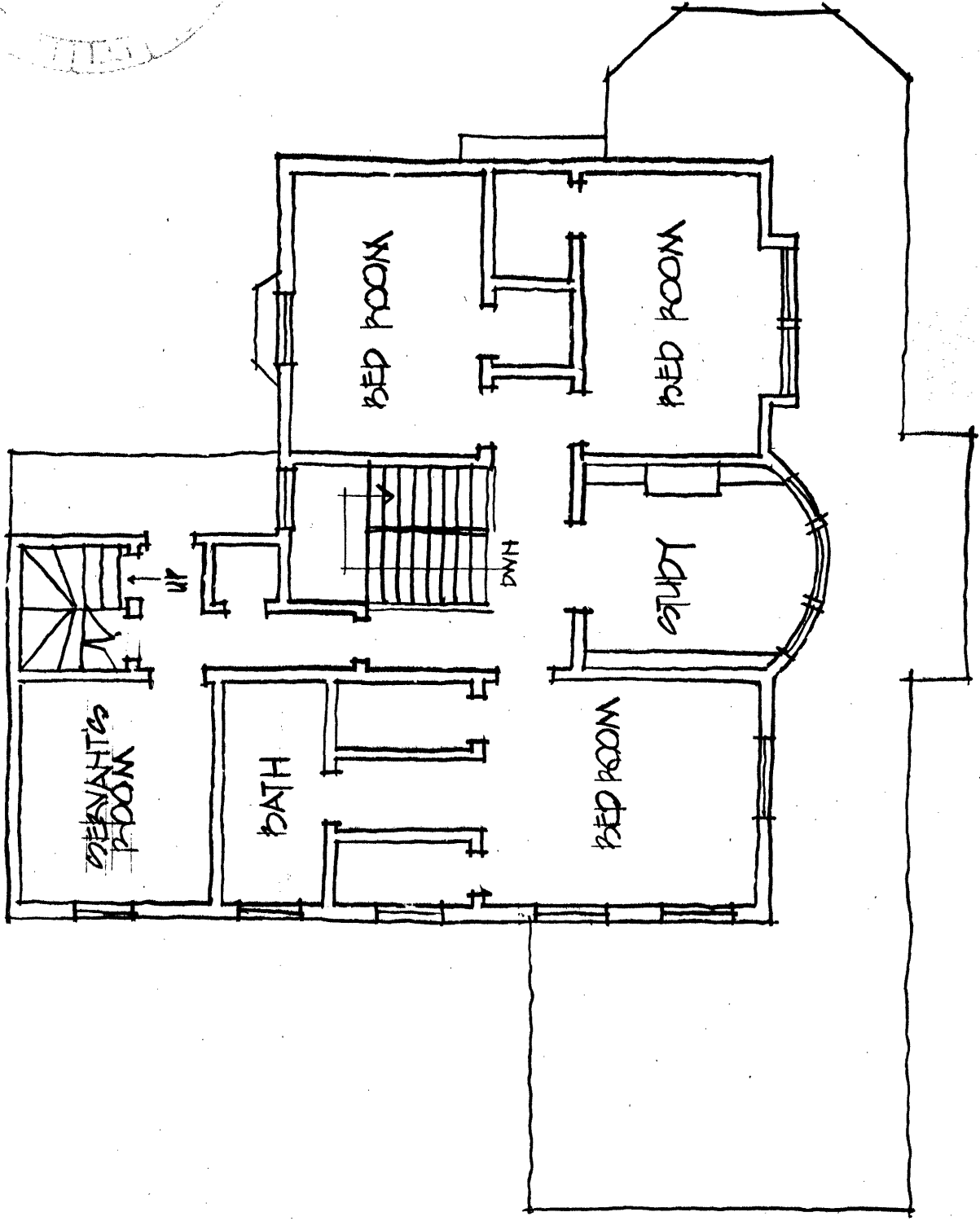
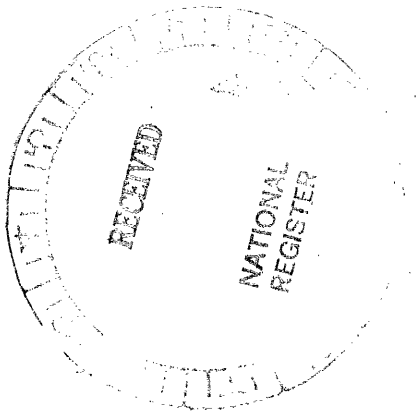
date

Chief of Registration



FIRST FLOOR PLAN
DIBLEY HOUSE - FARGO





SECOND FLOOR PLAN
DUPLEX HOUSE - FARGO

