

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED JUL 19 1979  
DATE ENTERED AUG 24 1979

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Johnson-Denny House

AND/OR COMMON Johnson/Manfredi House

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER  
4456 North Park Avenue

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN  
Indianapolis

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
Fifth

VICINITY OF

STATE  
Indiana 46205

CODE

COUNTY  
Marion

CODE

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Dr. and Mrs. Felice Manfredi

STREET & NUMBER

4456 North Park Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Indianapolis,

VICINITY OF

STATE

Indiana 46205

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Office of the Recorder of Marion County, Indiana

STREET & NUMBER

City-County Building

CITY, TOWN

Indianapolis

STATE

Indiana 46204

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Marion County Survey

DATE

1976

FEDERAL STATE  COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Indianapolis Preservation Commission

CITY, TOWN

Indianapolis

STATE

Indiana

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Now situated in an urban residential area of Indianapolis, the Johnson-Denny House originally was a farmhouse in rural Marion County. Constructed in 1862, the frame structure now has a "T" shape. The main block has two stories with a low gable roof. The main facade has five bays with the entrance in a projecting vestibule with a gable roof. Simple pilasters flank the door and support a simple pediment. The vestibule sides have small, round-arched windows. The other windows in the main facade have double-hung sashes with six over six lights and shutters. Double brackets support the roof. There are two gable end chimneys. The ends of the main block have plain boxed cornices and two windows on the ground floor with a single window in the second story.

The rear section is two stories with a gable roof and a chimney. The north elevation of this section has an entrance and five windows on the first floor and five windows on the second floor. The south elevation also has five windows on the second floor; there are two entrances and a window on the first floor. The west end has two entrances, two windows, and an enclosed porch below three windows on the second story.

There have been a number of changes to the structure. The main facade originally had a four by eight foot open porch with brackets beneath its roof. This original treatment suggested a stronger Italianate influence. About 1898 the small porch was removed and a larger porch with four columns was added. The second porch was, in turn, removed in 1920 to add the present vestibule. An addition to the west was added between 1873 and 1876 by Oliver Johnson as a home for his son, Franklin. About 1888 this addition was sold and removed to another location. In 1920 the house, itself, was moved 160 feet and turned 180°. This move was made after the farm was divided into residential lots. After the move, a number of windows in the rear section were added or altered. A woodshed attached to the rear was also removed. Between 1941 and 1957 a number of interior alterations were made; the only exterior change was enclosing the back porch added in 1920.

Also included on the property is a one-and-a-half story frame garage. This structure was constructed as a carriage house workshop in the nineteenth century.

# 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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)		
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES      1862

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Joshua L. & Moses K. Fatout

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE** The Johnson-Denny House is notable for its architectural features and its historical associations with the Johnson and Denny families. The house retains the original Italianate treatment in the bracketed cornice. The neo-colonial vestibule is a unique addition that is representative of the neo-colonial revival which was popular in the 1920's. The blending of these two dominant features provides an example of the architectural growth of a structure through several succeeding generations of popular styles.

The structure was built in 1862 for Oliver Johnson, who was a member of a pioneer family influential in the development of northern Marion County. The family had come to Marion County in 1822, one year after Oliver was born. The Johnsons were farmers and Oliver began to acquire farm land in 1855 in an area known as "Sugar Flats" for the many hard maple trees in the region. Oliver's family first lived in a cabin built by the previous owners. In 1862 Johnson contracted with Joshua L. and Moses Kitchell Fatout to construct a new house.

The Fatout brothers were successful Indianapolis contractors who erected many structures in the business section of Indianapolis, including the H. P. Wasson store. The home, according to the specification agreement, was to include a brick cellar, kitchen, pantries, parlor, sitting room, portico, wood shed, pine shaved shingle roof, pine siding, tin gutters, floors of yellow poplar and ash, white walnut outside doors and mantels, all to be completed "in a substantial and workmanlike manner according to plans and specifications." The cost of the house was \$2,375.00. The agreement for construction of the house was signed February 17, 1862, and the house was to be completed and ready for occupancy by October 1, 1862.

Oliver Johnson had helped farm his father's homestead along Fall Creek and this experience contributed greatly to his later farming successes. With his sons, James, Silas and Franklin, Oliver Johnson developed his own farm until it was known throughout the county as a model for others to emulate. Beginning with the second Indiana State Fair in 1852, he was noted for his prizewinning crops and livestock. His farming showed diversity by the inclusion of grains, fruits, vegetables, and livestock. The sugar maple grove was very important each spring with its sugar camp, producing maple syrup and sugar for sale. By the 1880's, in addition to the farm house, the property included a carriage house and workshop, a maple syrup boiling house, hen house, smoke house, barn, ice house, hog, calf, boar and horse lots, garden, orchard, and 60 acres of woods and pasture lands.

Oliver Johnson became a leading citizen and served as a County Supervisor interested in establishing good roads and supported the development of the toll road system in Marion County. Pamela Johnson was a charter member of the Sugar Grove Mission which began meeting in 1843 with a Methodist circuit rider. By 1900 the name of their church was changed to the Mapleton Methodist Episcopal Church. Today this church continues as the North United Methodist Church at Meridian and 38th Streets.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

SEE ATTACHED

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.4 of an acre

UTM REFERENCES

A 

1,6	57,2	8,4,0	4,4	0,9	8,7,0
ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING			

C 

ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING			

B 

ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING			

D 

ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lot 6 in Oliver Johnson Woods Addition in the City of Indianapolis

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY Felice Manfredi, assisted by

NAME / TITLE 1) Harriet O'Connor - Warren/O'Connor Research Service  
3115 Albright Ct., Indianapolis, Ind. 46268, Phone 283-5886; and

ORGANIZATION 2) Laurence R.O'Connor, A.I.A. DATE

STREET & NUMBER 4451 Central Avenue, Indianapolis, Indiana 46205, Phone 283-5886 TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN STATE

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL  STATE  LOCAL

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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Joseph P. Cloud* July 6, 1979

DATE

TITLE INDIANA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*Carol Hull*

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

8-29-79

ATTEST: *William H. Brathan*

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

8-31-79

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Between 1873 and 1876, Oliver Johnson had a four-room wing attached to the north side of the house for his son, Franklin, and Franklin's family. This wing included a sitting room, dining room, kitchen, pantry, hall and one bedroom. In 1888 Franklin purchased his own farm located south of the present fair grounds. About this time, the wing to the house was removed and moved elsewhere.

Franklin Johnson shared in the management of his father's farm, having a half interest in the stock and farm equipment and in the operation of the farm, itself. While still on his father's farm, he began breeding poultry, becoming known as a breeder of fine light Brahma poultry in later years. He began exhibiting poultry at the Indiana State Fair in 1869 and was a continuous exhibitor for the next 50 years. For more than 20 years he won prizes in Chicago for poultry breeding. Franklin Johnson sent three birds to Barcelona, Spain, for the World's Poultry Exhibition in 1923-24, being one of two breeders selected to represent the United States.

Oliver Johnson's grandson, Howard Johnson, grew up on this grandfather's farm until his father, Franklin, bought his own farm in 1888. When Howard married in 1894, he returned with his wife to live and farm his grandfather's property until 1906. Stories told to Howard of Oliver's childhood on his father's farm are related in the book, A Home in the Woods, written by Howard Johnson in 1951 at the request of the Indiana State Historical Society.

The Johnson family contributed significantly to the development of the city as it continued to move northward. The eastern half of the Oliver Johnson farm was sold by the family to the Realty Investment Company in 1901 to be platted and developed. Along the division line of the east and west halves of the farm, easements for a traction line and a public highway were granted. The first easement was granted in 1903 for a traction line to Broad Ripple and Noblesville. Another easement was granted in 1905 for a public highway along the same division. Both ran along present-day College Avenue. The traction line and highway opened up that part of the township to both residential and commercial development. Along College Avenue, multi-family dwellings and businesses were established. These businesses and the transportation facilities that developed were conveniently located but far enough away that the residential quality of Central Avenue was maintained.

The western half of the farm was retained by the Johnson family and in 1909 was platted by Silas and Franklin Johnson, becoming the Oliver Johnson's Woods Addition. Upon the death of Oliver Johnson in 1907, Franklin Johnson inherited his parents' home, including what became the southern portion of the Oliver Johnson's Woods Addition, lots 1 to 30.

In 1909, the Buschmann brothers, Charles and George, purchased lots 4, 5, 6, and 7, including the house, in the Oliver Johnson's Woods Addition. The Buschmann family emigrated from Germany to Indianapolis in 1852. Charles Buschmann began as a bookkeeper, advancing to president, with Lewis Meier & Co., a firm which manufactured men's utility and work clothing. He also was one of the founders of the Union Garment Manufacturers Association of America established in 1901.

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Charles and George Buschmann sold the house to Silas Johnson in January, 1912. Although owned by Silas Johnson, the house stood vacant much of the time until sold in 1919 to the Burns Realty Company.

George L. Denny purchased Lot 6 and the house in Oliver Johnson's Woods Addition from the Burns Realty Co. in 1920. The house was moved from its location on Lots 4, 5, 6, and 7 of the addition to its present location, Lot 6 with a new address, 4456 North Park Avenue. The move entailed relocating the house approximately 160 feet east of its original site. After the house was moved, the Burns Realty Company remodeled the structure. Burns Realty Company was a firm which included two noted Indianapolis architects, Lee Burns and Edward James. Their firm designed other Indianapolis structures including the Thomas Taggart Memorial in Riverside Park, the residence of Mrs. Walter C. Marmon, and the Saddle Horse Barn at the Indiana State Fair. The extensive remodeling of the house by the Burns Realty Company including a new front porch, kitchen cabinetry, a central hall for a second floor, central heating, modern plumbing, and the addition of windows cut in the blank ends of the front section.

George L. Denny, the owner of the house from 1920 to 1941, was the son of Caleb Denny, the only three-time Mayor in Indianapolis history. He graduated from the Indianapolis Law School and was admitted to the bar in 1902. His first political position was as a member of the Indianapolis City Council from 1911-1914. Later, he was appointed City Comptroller in 1947, becoming Mayor of Indianapolis the same year upon the death of Mayor Tyndall. Denny ran an unsuccessful race as a Republican candidate for Congress from the 11th Congressional District.

The Denny's sold the house in 1941 to the Joseph L. Hanna family. Hanna was the Indianapolis manager of General Outdoor Advertising Co. He was the president of the Madison-Penn Realty Co.

The house was sold by the Hanna's to Robert W. Greenleaf in 1958. Mr. Greenleaf is an educator and author on the faculty of the Graduate School of Business of Indiana-Purdue University, Indianapolis. He wrote an Introduction to Corporate Financial Statements in 1965.

The house then passed to its current owners, Felice and Barbara Manfredi in January, 1963.

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Johnson-Denny House

CONTINUATION SHEET

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Floor Plan of Johnson-Denny House. ca. 1969. In possession of Felice Manfredi.

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