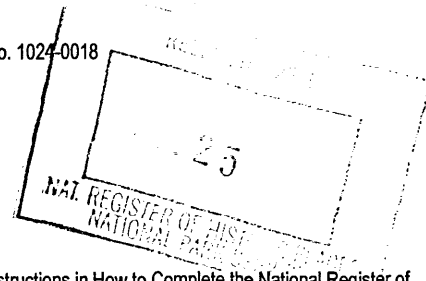


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM



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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 any 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: Fessenden, Joseph House

other names/site number: #22:Fessenden-Hanks House (per Lovejoy's Royaltan); 1416-2:#12 (VT Historic Sites & Structures Survey)

2. Location

street & number 58 Bridge Street not for publication n/a
city or town Roylton vicinity n/a
state Vermont code VT county Windsor code 027 zip code 05068

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.)

Suzanne C. Janelle, National Register Specialist, 7-23-02
Signature of certifying official Date

Vermont State Historic Preservation Office
State or 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 commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

Edson H. Beall Signature of Keeper
Date of Action 9/6/02

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):

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
1	2 buildings
	sites
	structures
	objects
1	2 Total

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the
National Register NA

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

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic Sub: single dwelling
Domestic multiple dwelling
Health Care medical office

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic Sub: single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Georgian
Federal

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick
roof slate
walls weatherboard
other iron

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

See continuation sheets (7-1 through 7-13)

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.

- 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.1802 – c. 1923

Significant Dates

c. 1802- c.1828

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

Criteria Considerations

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

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

See continuation sheets (8-1 through 8- 11)

Additional Documentation

=====

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

- Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

=====

Property Owner

=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Richard McGovern

street & number 58 Bridge Street telephone (802) 763-8789

city or town Royalton state VT zip code 05068

=====

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

Fessenden, Joseph House
name of property
Royalton, Windsor County, Vermont
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The c. 1802 Joseph Fessenden House is an outstanding example of a 2 ½-story, frame, late Georgian style house with a gable roof, paired interior chimneystacks, and many decorative features combining Federal Style elements with Georgian Style construction. The house's door surround is very similar to the "Tuscan" example given in Plate X of Asher Benjamin's influential 1797 pattern book, *The Country Builder's Assistant*, and shows how the Adams or Federal style, made popular in New England through Benjamin's books, was often applied to Vermont houses with otherwise Georgian Style massing and proportions. The house possesses a very high degree of integrity that is evident through the historic qualities of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. It retains many original and early features including decorative woodwork and unusual early ironwork. The setting of the house in the historic village of Royalton is also remarkably intact not only with neighboring historic village buildings and roads but also the house's own extensive gardens. The present owner has addressed the loss by fire of its historic adjacent barn by moving a similar old barn to the site, restoring the house's immediate physical historic context.

The house, with a "Georgian" first floor plan, has an elaborate raking and horizontal cornice in the Doric order with partial cornice returns. The central front entrance door is topped by an elegant semi-circular leaded fanlight and boldly framed by a broad, Tuscan order triangular partial pediment, broken at the bottom cornice so that each end of the raking cornice is supported by flat pilasters. Each pilaster is prominently ornamented by a fragment of Tuscan order entablature and base. There are bold, projecting entablatures above the first floor windows on the front elevation and above the first and second floor windows on the gable end elevations. An original 1-story, classically detailed shed-roofed, porch extends across the rear elevation directly above an enclosed extension of the brick cellar (kitchen) story. The porch is supported by slender Tuscan columns topped with a simple entablature and ornamented with a striking "Chinese Chippendale" railing. Extending down to Bridge Street from the porch is an original stone staircase with an unusual wrought iron railing ending in a coiled serpent. On the center of the rear roof elevation is a narrow pedimented dormer with a small balcony. The house has many rare original interior features including elegant stairways, twin full cellar kitchens, twin dumbwaiters, and many fine, Georgian and Federal style mantels, cornices, and other interior trim. Many original interior features have been restored based on physical evidence.

Prominently located at the intersection of two turnpikes (White River Turnpike or Old Main Street, and the Woodstock-Royalton turnpike or Bridge Street), the Joseph Fessenden House presents its formal façade on the southeast side of Old Main Street. In front of the house is now a small green separating the Old Main Street from the newer Vermont Route 14. This intersection was once the center of the village. The

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house's neighbors to the northeast are the 1836 Greek Revival style Episcopal Church, the c. 1810 Sprague house, the 1844 Center Schoolhouse and the 1839/1840 Greek Revival style Town Hall. On the southwest, the present garden lot once was occupied by the very large 1810 Cascadnac Inn. Across the street are the brick 1853 bank building, houses, a former grain store, as well as the 1839 Methodist Church/Royalton Academy and the 1839 First Congregational Church. Bridge Street runs southeast from Main Street and the Joseph Fessenden house, with an extensive garden behind it to the southeast, is located on the southwest corner of the Bridge Street and Main Street intersection. Across from the house on Bridge Street is the c. 1825 Federal style Bloss House, the former parsonage for the Congregational Church. Further towards the river on Bridge Street are a few smaller, post-1927 flood houses.

The house is built into a hillside, appearing 2 ½-stories from the main street and 3 ½-stories when approached from the south along Bridge Street. Directly behind (southeast) the house is a large open lot that has always been part of the property as its garden and orchard. Currently, the lot contains a formal, landscaped garden that includes sculpture. In addition, the property now has an open lawn area to the southwest on the main street level that used to be part of the old Cascadnac Hotel property.

An old barn, the Winnie Royce Barn, c. 1800, was moved to the site from nearby Chelsea village, Vermont by the current owner in 1991 and sits behind the upper lawn area on the site of the property's original barn. The exact footprint of the original barn was identified through archaeology performed by the current owners and the current, non-contributing barn is situated with its north corner positioned diagonally across from the south corner of the house. A deck extends from the rear first floor porch of the house to connect with the barn entrance. The original barn was destroyed by fire in 1944, and as documented in historic photographs, was of similar size, orientation, and overall gable front massing as the Winnie Royce barn.

A second barn (c.1820) was also moved to the present property by the current owner in the past ten years from the Chelsea Health Center in Chelsea, Vermont. It is non-contributing and located in the southern corner of the property, which was once part of the Cascadnac Hotel property.

Exterior:

The front or northwest façade has a symmetrical, five bay ranking with a formal entrance in the center under the eave side of the slate gable roof. Two large brick interior chimneys sit on the roof ridge and are each topped by a raised, slate spark

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arrestor. Late 19th century photographs of the house show what is likely a slate roof. The current owner replaced a 20th century standing seam roof with new slates and found evidence of original shake roofing in the process. The brick chimneys have been re-pointed and restored recently as well.

The regularly spaced windows contain 1988 restoration 12/12 sash with "restoration glass" and are based on an original window found in the attic. (A mixture of 6/6 and 1/1 sash were removed). There are interior storm windows. The original window trim is a casing surrounded by a projecting molding that is topped on the first floor windows with a deeply molded, attenuated lintel. The lintel includes 8 bands of molding with the top bands projecting prominently from the clapboard. The second floor windows have the basic casing and surround and butt directly to the cornice, typical of Vermont's Georgian homes. The Tuscan order front door surround is as elegantly and elaborately detailed with a triangular pediment, delicately broken on the bottom cornice to surround the leaded semi-circular transom, over a restored broad, 6-panel door, matching the original rear door. Overall the door and door surround is more typical of the Federal/Adams style than the heavier Georgian style which typically used full pediments. The eave has a Doric order plancere, which matches one described in Fig. C, Plate VIII of Asher Benjamin's 1797 *Country Builder's Assistant*, emphasizing again, the combination of Georgian and Federal stylistic elements that characterize the house. The soffit is ornamented with shallow, broad mutule blocks that are a foot square and entirely and regularly pierced by small 1" circular holes. Below the eave, is an entablature with a dentilated frieze.

The two gable facades (northeast and southwest) with four regular bays and two windows in the attic gable have the same restored windows and original window trim as the front façade. The elaborate lintels are on both the first and second floor windows and not on the attic level pair. On the northeast gable facade, one bay (i.e. both first and second floor windows in a vertical line) contains dummy windows. On the southwest gable façade one first floor bay contains a dummy window. These have the same window trim as the regular windows but contain no sash – just clapboarded wall. (At one time, closed shutters covered these dummies.) These correspond to service areas on the interior and were likely installed to preserve the strict symmetry of the house's Georgian style massing. The dentilated entablature and pierced soffit mutule blocks of the front and rear façades wrap around the corners in a brief return. The raking cornices are also ornamented with the pierced mutule blocks and dentilated frieze.

The rear or southeast facing façade is really three and a half stories as it is built into a hillside allowing for a full walk-out basement on this side. There are four full height windows across the basement, which extends out in common bond brick under the first

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floor porch. In the center is a wide doorway in line with the one on the porch above. There is a modern, gable roofed frame enclosure extending out around this doorway with clapboarded sides and small windows but open in front. The basement door is a six-panel solid wood door flanked by narrow, operable four over four double hung sash in the place of sidelights. These extend two thirds of the door height. The size of the sash lights match those in the regular windows. The doorframe and basement window surrounds are quite plain. The windows have the same restored sash and original casings and surrounds as the other facades. The surrounds on the first and second floor windows have the same more decorative casings and surrounds as on other facades, but on this façade there are no added lintels as the first floor windows and rear central door abut the ceiling of the porch directly.

The roof of the porch has been rebuilt by the present owner based on what was there and physical evidence and is covered in standing seam metal. The porch has a solid, curved, plastered ceiling under the shed roof. The Tuscan order columns and Chinese Chippendale railing are original with some added matching pieces on the barn end where the porch was extended to the relocated Winnie Royce Barn. The floor of the porch is tongue and groove solid wood flooring and reproduction chandeliers hang from the curved ceiling. The back wall of the house under the porch is not clapboarded, but rather has a wide, flush wainscoting under the windows and plaster above. Its doorway is more formal than the basement doorway below and has an added seven light transom above it. Double hung four over four sidelights similar to those in the basement extend two thirds down on either side of the original, wide, six-panel, wood door. On the northeast end of the porch, and original dry-laid stone staircase with slate slab steps extends down to the street. The stair railing is a remarkable original wrought iron rod ending in an elegant coiled serpent that is supported by a stone pillar.

The slate roof of the southeast façade is adorned by a single, centered, original gable dormer with a full pediment and clapboard cheeks. The dormer is just the size of the normal size double hung twelve over twelve sash it contains. A simple wooden railing extends across and beyond it on both sides and connects back to the roof, although there is no balcony.

Barns (both non-contributing):

Non-original to this site, the c. 1800 Winnie Royce hay barn was moved from the nearby town of Chelsea, Vermont in 1991. It has a gable roof with vertical unpainted pine sheathing. The English style barn is entered on the eave side facing northwest. The scribed, hand-hewn timber frame dates to c. 1800 and is surrounded by reproduction flooring, sheathing and roof. It generally matches the overall size, shape and location of

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the original barn based on photographic and archaeological evidence. The original barn burned in 1944 in the fire that consumed the neighboring Cascadnac Inn. Late 19th century photographs show a covered shed connecting the barn to the rear porch, and now the connection is an open deck with railing. A second barn (c.1820) was also moved to the present property around the same time from the Chelsea Health Center in Chelsea, Vermont. This small, simple gable barn with unpainted vertical pine sheathing is located in the southern corner of the property, down the slope from and behind the Winnie Royce barn, which once contained horse sheds of the Cascadnac Hotel property.

Although, as non-original, moved structures, the barns must be considered non-contributing, they nevertheless very successfully restored the appearance of the house's physical historic context. This is especially true of the Winnie Royce barn.

Interior:

The interior of the Joseph Fessenden House is full of outstanding original and early decorative woodwork reflecting a range of classical styles and early 19th century construction features including elaborate twin cooking hearths and food storage chambers in the basement level, an elegant staircase and generously wide second floor hall, an original dormer flanked by built-in interior cabinets, and original soapstone stove thimbles built into the garret level chimneys.

Although it is a 2 ½-story house from the formal main street façade, this full Georgian plan home has four finished and occupied floors. It was built into a hillside so that the basement level is fully at-grade in the rear and extends out under the deep first floor rear porch. There are twin cooking hearths on either side of the basement and food storage facilities beyond these in the cool, below-grade section of the front basement. These features may be original or may date to Elias Lyman's 1828 renovation of the house as a double.

The second floor, which boasts a large ballroom and formal sitting rooms, has a generously wide central stair hall with twin staircases leading down to the first floor level. The original stair railing and banister is a thin round railing that curves around the corners on the second floor landing as well as along the run of the stair itself, curving up to meet the hall banister with no newel post. The spindles are of quite thin, square stock. The terminal newel post on the first floor is simple and thin, comprised of a base of square stock, center column of plain round stock, a capital of square stock, and topped by a plain knob, typical of this period. It is quite similar to the newel post

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illustrated in Plate 43 of Asher Benjamin's 1827 edition of *The American Builder's Companion*.

The third floor appears to have been originally finished as bedrooms - although in a much simpler style than the first and second formal floors. The present stair to the third floor was partly installed by the present owner who restored the bottom half of the straight run. The owner removed a landing halfway down the stair from which a spiral stair extended to end in the center of the second floor hall. This spiral stair may have been added in the late 19th or early 20th century. According to the owner, when it was removed, the evidence of the original straight run matching the main stair was uncovered and used as a guide for the new stair.

The arrangement and formality of the rooms as well as the overall size and prominent location of the house suggest that it may have been built as a tavern and inn. However, its intricate and elaborate decorative details are far grander than those found in most early Vermont taverns. Documentary evidence has not been found to support its use as a tavern by Fessenden or any subsequent owners. However, the lack of clarity in the early deeds allows for the possibility that it had been built earlier as a tavern that was purchased by Fessenden and then later decorated more richly.

The present owners have surrounded the extant original features with careful restorations of missing features based on physical evidence, such as a missing piece of mantle, simple, operable twin dumbwaiters, and re-located staircases and also have added some features based on the design of Georgian style taverns and houses, such as the bar cage in the first floor rear, a door in the front parlor, and some ceiling cornices. Other small modern changes include the addition of powder rooms. They have restored the circulation floor plan between service and public spaces - removing and adding walls using moldings that match others in the room and as architectural traces have indicated.

The collection of fireplace surrounds and mantels, by itself, is rare and outstanding. There are eight different, highly decorative moldings and surrounds in all the formal rooms of the first and second floors. All of these are early - either original or added by 1830 - and only one was previously altered and later restored by the present owner. Stove pipe thimbles were the original heating system for the garret level. The basement kitchens have simpler, more utilitarian mantels and moldings surrounding the cooking hearths which each have a bake oven, a cooking hearth, and a set of two large boiling kettles built into a recess with an original shutter door for closing in the steam.

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While none of the formal mantels have the floral festoons Asher Benjamin was known for, they nevertheless combine several of the moldings illustrated in his 1797 *The Country Builder's Assistant*. Elements can be found of the Ionic, Doric and Tuscan orders as illustrated by Benjamin but, in the Joseph Fessenden House, the mantel and cornice moldings are even more elongated and slender. They draw on both the Georgian and later Federal/Adams styles in the use of classical vocabulary. In a few mantels the classical forms are extreme in flattened and elongated proportions suggesting that they may date to the 1828 renovation.

Room descriptions, (Note: since the house is on a northwest-southeast axis, the four main rooms on each floor are referred to by their outermost corner: north, east, south, and west.):

Basement Level:

Entry foyer: centrally located vestibule with a new, walled stair ascending to the first floor from the west corner that replaced a deteriorated existing staircase in the same location. To the staircase's right (east) a modern bath has been added which is entered from the east room. Wainscoting in foyer is partly original and partly new matching the existing. The exterior door is flanked by half sidelights. Doors open to the left and right off the foyer into two large cooking hearth rooms: the present kitchen on the southwest and a sitting room on the northeast.

Kitchen (south corner): has restored sash, modern kitchen counters, appliances, a new plaster ceiling with recessed lights, and a new (lower) concrete floor. The elaborate early kitchen cooking fireplace covers the northwest wall and is fronted by a large brick hearth made from re-set original floor bricks. The broad, soapstone cooking center has a bake oven and fire chamber below it each fronted with a plain, early iron door with original hinges. Next to the bake oven, in the center is the large fireplace containing a cooking crane and hooks, and at the far end is a set of recessed boiling kettles with a fire chamber below each kettle fronted by iron doors. The recess has an original sliding solid wood shutter with original wrought iron handle. This remarkable cooking center is nearly identical to one pictured on Plate 59 of the 1827 edition of Asher Benjamin's *An American Builder's Companion*. In that plate the famous Rumford Roaster and a third boiler kettle are depicted but are not present in the Fessenden fireplaces.

There is a door in the north corner to the dumbwaiter and rear room. The dumbwaiter (possibly original or possibly installed by Elias Lyman in 1828 or Dr. Morse in the late 1860s per Lovejoy) is a simple wooden set of shelves that go up and down on counterbalanced rope pulleys set into the frame. The shelves are original on this side

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and the shaft way was restored by the present owner based on the extant shaft way on the other side.

Front storeroom (west): The front room is partly unfinished with a cement floor, exposed beams/joists, brick interior walls and stone exterior/foundation walls. Originally a root cellar, this space now houses the modern water and hot water heating systems. The southwest brick wall is the rear wall of the brick kitchen hearth and has a small wooden door leading to a small, narrow smoke chamber located between the fireplace and kettles. The center interior wall (northeast) creates another, raised storage area constructed entirely of brick and likely original. This dividing wall has a wooden door and small openings at the top with bars in the openings allowing air to circulate. The interior of the brick storage room walls are plastered and the brick floor is one step up from the root cellar-type storage area (matching one on the other side) constructed of brick with small openings at the top of the walls with bars in them. The interior brick walls of the storeroom are plastered. This drier storeroom is more vermin-proof than the general root cellar area and may have been used to store special goods, even possibly connected to the mercantile business of several of the early owners.

Large "sitting" room (east): This was originally another kitchen and has a wooden floor, original plaster walls, the identical elaborate cooking hearth/oven/kettles as on the western side, and the same dumbwaiter. On this side the shelves were missing but the shaft way was still extant. The present owner restored the moveable shelves based on the extant example on the western side. The passage to the rear room is a mirror of the one on the western side. On the rear (southeast) wall, there are the same restored windows as elsewhere.

Front storeroom (north): This storage room is very like the one on the other side but has a painted concrete floor, and finished walls and ceiling. This room has the identical brick storeroom on the southwest wall and small smoke chamber in the rear of hearth chimney as on the other side.

First Floor:

Front foyer/formal entry (center): The exterior entrance has an original leaded fanlight over a replacement six raised panel door (matching the original rear door) with original hardware and slide bar brackets. The room has an elaborate original cornice. Although the hall was open from front to back when the present owner purchased the property, there was evidence that it had been divided into a front and back hall. Based on physical evidence found in the floorboards, wallpaper and paint remnants, and the cornice and ceiling framing, the dividing wall was reconstructed by present owner and a

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matching section of cornice was installed there. The main stair and simple newel and railings are described above. There are doorways to the north and west front rooms with original six-panel doors.

In an early 20th century photograph of the open front door, a glazed door in the earlier midway wall could be seen through the front screen door. During the most recent renovation by the present owner, a larger Victorian period door from the hall leading into the rear east room was removed. This door may have been part of a renovation undertaken by Dr. James Morse in the 1860s or 70s to make the east room into a doctor's office. Patients entering the rear of the house would have used the original door and Dr. Morse could have entered the room from the privacy of the front hall using the Victorian period door. If the rear stair to the second floor was also removed at this time, the separation between patient/public and family space would have been fairly complete.

Rear hall/passageway (center): The rear door, opening onto the rear porch, is an original, extremely wide door with six shallow recessed panels. The doorway has original hardware, 2/3 sidelights, and a simple, 7-light, straight transom. The side lights are in the form of four over four double hung sash on either side of the door in which the individual lights are the same size as those in the twelve light main sash making the windows very narrow. There is no cornice in the hallway. Doors on the east and south are original and enter into the rear main rooms ("tap room" and "formal study").

This space was reconfigured by the present owner to accommodate the restored second floor stairs and south wall of the front foyer. A small, modern powder room was added on the northwest wall. The hallway contains a reconstructed stair to the second floor matching the front one (based on physical evidence) as well as a walled stair down to the basement. When the floor and ceiling were opened for the second stair, a framed and finished opening was discovered, as well as indications on the wallpaper and paint of the original stairway. Also found were an original stringer and a floor board with holes corresponding to the spindles and newel. The discovery allowed for an accurate reconstruction of the original rear stairway.

Front, formal parlor/ "Morning room" (north): The original, wide board floor was uncovered by the present owner's removal of 20th century tongue & groove maple flooring. Some of the original floorboards were deteriorated and replaced in kind. The original molded cornice, baseboard, window trim with paneled surround, six-panel doors, and door trim were stripped of paint with a heat gun and re-painted based on visual evidence of original paint colors by the present owner. The door to the right of the fireplace was installed by the present owner to match and balance the original door on

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the left. The soapstone fireplace and mantel are original. Mantel is quite elongated with a thin top piece molded on the edge and extending out far over the supporting ovolo and scotia molding at the top of the fluted architrave. There are two windows in the east wall and two in the north wall. All of them have original, paneled surrounds that incorporate multi-leafed, paneled interior accordion shutters and a large raised panel below the sash extending to the floor.

"Dining Room" (west): All the trim and woodwork are original and include simple, molded window surrounds (with no extended paneling) on the two northwest and two southwest windows. A 6-panel door to the front hall and a smaller one to the back hall on the northeast wall as well as two six-panel doors flanking the fireplace and leading to service corridors are all original. (The small paneled door to the back hall was found stored in the house and was re-installed by present owner.) The elaborate, original mantel over the soapstone fireplace is different from the one in the formal parlor. It has a wide, oval band as its central motif and a paneled architrave below. There is a painted, wide-board wooden floor.

"Tap Room" (south): This room had been used as a restaurant kitchen in the 1970s with 2 floors laid over the original flooring. There also appears to have been a non-original stair to the basement cut into the corner at one time. There were cabinets and large industrial appliances installed around the walls that were all removed by the present owner in 1988. The original floor had deteriorated from water damage and was largely replaced in-kind by the present owner. The removal of modern wall cabinets revealed original, flush board wainscoting (very wide boards laid horizontally) under a chair rail all around the room. The original fireplace mantel had had its left projecting corner cut off to fit a large commercial range in next to it. The present owner removed the range and restored the missing piece of mantel. This mantelpiece, similar to one in the "Formal Study" on the east, has a pair of narrow turned columns supporting the mantel shelf.

The dumbwaiter on this side of the house was extant on the floor below but had been removed at this level. A passageway between the "Tap room" and the dining room had been created in more recent times in the location of the dumbwaiter closet. The present owner restored the dumbwaiter shaft way and the closet around it opening from the "tap room" but not from the dining room. Doors to the service corridor leading to the front dining room on the left of the fireplace and to the center hall were restored as well. Original window surrounds were repainted. Paint colors used in the room's restoration were based on physical evidence found under existing paint. In addition, a tap room bar cage, based on an 18th century design from Colonial Williamsburg, was built in the northwest corner by present owner and a cornice was also installed matching other

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original cornices in the house. In the southeast corner, there is an exposed and painted post.

"Formal Study" (east): The original and/or historic features in this room include the flooring, paneled wainscoting, fireplace mantel and surround, window trim, the hall door, and two doors flanking the fireplace (one a closet and the other communicating to the "morning room"). The fireplace mantel matches the one in "tap room" and is an extremely elongated series of shallow, flat steps expanding out towards the thin, molded mantel edge. It is supported on a wide, simple entablature that rests on pairs of slender columns framing the fireplace. The columns sit on a soapstone base that matches the hearth. To the left of the fireplace, is a paneled door to an apparently original closet with shelves and the restored dumbwaiter. To the right of the fireplace, a paneled door leads to a closet opening into the front room. The paneled door to the hall is original, but there was another hall door installed later that was removed by the present owner. It was a larger Victorian door that had likely been installed there in the mid-late 19th century.

Second Floor:

Center Stair Hall: The front (northwest) half of this space is largely original and unaltered with its formal front stair and simple but elegantly curving handrail and hall banister, a front window, and two doorways (leading to the front rooms) with molded frames. The rear (southeast) half of the hall was reconfigured by the present owner to more closely resemble the arrangement indicated by physical evidence of a straight stair run coming from the rear first floor entry and of a straight stair run up to the third floor. (A twisting staircase with mid-level landing that led from second to third story was located in the vicinity of the present rear stair and was removed by the present owner. This stair may have been installed in the mid to late 19th century or even in the early 20th century and utilized matching hand railings to the front stair.) The very rear of the hall had also been enclosed in the past to accommodate a bathroom. Added partitions and doorways were removed and infilled and the stair reconfigured. The bottom half of the second to third floor stairs were rebuilt as a straight run following physical evidence. The reconstructed rear first floor stairs have hand railings and a curving hall banister that match the original front stair. The rear portion of the hall also has an original exterior window opening (with restored sash like the front hall window) and an original doorway and frame into the south and east rooms.

"Ballroom," (North): This large, formal parlor has similar molded frames on the doors and four windows as the main rooms on the first floor. In addition, there is a molded chair rail (with plaster below) around the entire room and a pair of horizontal moldings framing a "picture" area between the front (northwest) wall windows. There are two

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doors flanking the fireplace, which has a simple molded surround and mantel. The door on the left is an old, six-panel door that may be original or date to a later 19th century renovation and enters a shallow closet. The door on the right was added by the present owner and matches the left one. The fireplace surround is either original or was added early on and uses classical vocabulary similar to that found in the available architectural pattern books of the early 19th century. The mantel is a thin top piece composed of several receding moldings over a heavy, fluted band very like the one illustrated by Asher Benjamin in plate 20 of his 1797 *Country Builder's Assistant* but without the floral festoons and carvings. Like the Benjamin plate, the fireplace surround has a projecting center panel that breaks the top of the mantel as well and projecting, plain, molded pilasters on either side of the fireplace. The floor is a wide board floor that has some spring to it much like a dancing floor. The present owner added a room cornice matching the cornice of the fireplace mantelpiece.

"Sitting room" (west): This room has the original window and door moldings similar to those in other formal rooms and a fairly plain molded mantel and fireplace surround. It is similar to the one in the "Ballroom" but without the added fluting and pilasters. The present owner restored decorative wall stenciling in this room based on a fragment found on the wall beneath the wallpaper. To the left of the fireplace, there is a shallow closet with a six-panel door and to the right is a doorway into the passage to the rear bedroom.

"Best Bedroom," (south): This large rear bedroom originally had two smaller rooms on the southeast side that been modified in the past and have presently been remodeled into a single bathroom using an original door into main bedroom. There was originally a second door onto the hall from this smaller set of rooms. This would have balanced out the symmetry of the hall and matched the downstairs arrangement as well. The present owner left the wall infilled on the end in order to maintain the separate bathroom on the southeast end. The present door into the room is original and is off the small landing area between the two stairs down to the first floor and faces the end of the chimney. The mantel in this room is the most unusual in the house for its extreme elongation. It almost seems as if the proportions of the moldings were those of a tall, room cornice instead of a mantel in a moderate sized room. Even so, the many thin, receding, square layers underneath the mantel are not based on a classical model. The fireplace surround beneath it, however, with its architrave, frieze, and molded pilasters is more classically based. The room has two windows on the southwest wall, one of which is in line with the chimney. The southeast wall with two windows is now in a narrow bathroom that extends across that end of the room. The bathroom has modern finishes and fixtures.

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“Withdrawing Room” (east): This room currently used a bedroom may have once served as a sitting room for the ballroom. It has a passage closet and a small, modern powder room through the two doors on the northwest wall. These doors were added by the present owner to replace non-historic doors and match the original hall door. There are two windows on the southeast wall and only one on the northeast wall. There is a second window on the exterior northeast façade but it is blind and corresponds to the closet area on the interior. The fireplace mantel and surround in this room matches the one in the south bedroom. The mantel is an extremely elongated series of very thin square receding layers over a more classically proportioned molded surround. The painted wood trim and wide board floors are original.

Third Floor/Attic:

The ceilings of the finished third floor spaces have exposed roof rafters (many replaced by the present owner due to deterioration) with new insulated sheetrock panels between them. The four main third floor rooms have very simple wood trim, simple panel doors, and wide board floors. Each of them has an original soapstone stovepipe thimble built into the brick chimneys. These are now temporarily infilled with insulation. Each room has a single window on the gable side and some have shallow closets. Three are used as bedrooms and one, the west, has a kitchenette appliance unit in it.

Central Hall: The third floor is served by a stair leading up from the rear (southeast) of the second floor hall. The lower half of this stair was modified by the present owner (see second floor hall) but the third floor section is original. The front (northwest) and rear (southeast) walls are high knee walls with sloping ceilings under the gable roof. The rear wall of the hall has an original or early gable roof dormer with built in drawers in the knee walls on either side that have hardware matching that found on the kitchen boiler kettle shutters. The front several feet of the hall have been separated off into a bathroom with a four-panel door and small, four-light transom above. There is an original pull-down ladder with wrought iron latch on the ceiling to provide access to the small space above the center of the hall.

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The Joseph Fessenden house possesses significance for embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, specifically a Georgian and early Federal style frame house built c. 1802. The outstanding features of the house, including the general massing and fenestration, elaborate cornice and entablature, Tuscan pedimented front door surround, and an elegant rear porch with Chinese Chippendale railing, exemplify the late Georgian and early Federal style in early Vermont architecture and is an excellent surviving example. The interior has outstanding features as well that have significance for exemplifying a range of early architectural styles including the Georgian and Federal.

Within the context of Royalton and Vermont's historical architectural environment, the Joseph Fessenden House constitutes an outstanding example of settlement period, high-style architecture utilizing Georgian and early Federal style design. The exterior design and form of the house are late Georgian in style with strong, prominent features drawn from Federal and Adam style sources in the frontispiece, cornice, and Chinese Chippendale rear porch railing. It is fairly high style and fancy for Vermont houses built this early. The interior is even more elaborate but is mixed stylistically, from classical and stolid detailed woodwork that is likely original to construction to extremely attenuated and elongated Federal style mantles and cornice work that may represent installations over time. Many of the house's interior and exterior decorative elements can be found in Asher Benjamin's influential pattern books, like his 1797 *The Country Builder's Assistant*. The rich decorative combinations found in the Joseph Fessenden house serve to illustrate how the Adams or Federal style, made popular in New England through Benjamin's books, was often applied to Vermont houses with otherwise Georgian Style massing and proportions. All the early documented owners were fairly prominent and prosperous and may also have utilized architectural pattern books to add to the interior work.

In the area, the other early homes were often plainer or slightly later in date than this one. In Royalton, the 18th century Jacob Smith and Zebulon Lyon houses were built around the same time, but were plainer. The Dennison house and Fox Stand tavern were both built later, the tavern was much plainer in the tradition of most early Vermont taverns and the Dennison house was a fine Federal style house. Certainly, in the period of about 1795 to 1810, there were several very fine homes built in the region, particularly Windsor, under the direct or indirect influence of Asher Benjamin, a master builder who brought the fashionable Adams style to the Vermont frontier. One of Benjamin's students, Asa Edgerton, worked out of nearby Randolph in the first decades of the 19th century. In Royalton, a fine cabinet maker had a shop around this time as well, John Marshall.

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The house retains many rare original and early features and its exterior has been exceptionally well-preserved throughout its 200- year history. It has an original stone staircase from the rear porch with a rare early wrought iron railing shaped like a coiled serpent and remarkable twin elaborate cooking hearths in the cellar kitchens. It is certainly one of the finest and most elaborate houses in Royalton of the time and served as the fine residence of several successful Royalton merchants, businessmen, and professionals. It was used as a two family residence in the 1830s and then later as a single family residence in the mid-19th century with boarders taken in. In addition to residential use, and rented rooms, the house has contained a doctor's office, tailor shop, and more recently, a restaurant. Throughout its long history, the house has retained two identical and elaborate early 19th century brick hearth kitchens in the cellar, elaborate root cellars, dumbwaiters, elegant stairs, richly decorated mantels and trim that have disappeared in many other houses of this vintage. By the time the house was out of fashion and getting old, the railroad had come to South Royalton, bypassing this village and setting in motion its long decline as a thriving commercial center. Perhaps this decline in fortunes helped save the features of this house from modernization and remodeling. It served many families for long periods. Local tradition includes the Joseph Fessenden house in a list of Royalton stops on the Underground Railroad but this is not substantiated by evidence.

According to local historian, Evelyn Lovejoy who wrote the comprehensive 1911 book *History of Royalton Vermont* (cited hereafter as "Lovejoy"), this house was built around 1800, but physical evidence supports a date of 1802. It seems that Joseph Fessenden either bought it in 1801 and modified it into the elaborate house of today or built it himself shortly after buying the property. The present owner of the house reports that when he was insulating exterior walls and had removed the interior plaster, the exposed inside of a sheathing board had the following written on it: "JF '02." The deeds are somewhat unclear at this period. Fessenden bought a parcel from Jacob Smith that may be the house lot or one adjacent to it. Smith, a lawyer, had built a house (still standing) before 1797 in which he lived on the north side of the turnpike. However the grand list of 1798 shows him owning two houses. Smith and another previous owner, Zebulon Lyon owned many lots and were making a great many transactions during this period. Although the deed has not been found, Lovejoy stated that Elkanah Stevens, another early Royalton developer, held the property at one time. Fessenden as well as his business partner, Samuel Grant, bought and sold several pieces of property around this time as well including the "old Society Schoolhouse" and a lot with Elkanah Steven's store on it.

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When Joseph Fessenden sold the house in 1811, the purchase price was high suggesting a major investment or the construction of the house itself. The woodwork on the interior is very fancy and is stylistically somewhat different than the exterior Georgian architecture. In 1802 Royalton, it would have been possible for a wealthy man through the use of British and American architectural pattern books, especially one who was an importer of English goods and a seller of books like Fessenden, to have a local builder create a house combining stylistic details ranging from Georgian to Federal and Adams style. However, Joseph Fessenden was a fairly young, unmarried man starting out in business in 1802, and it is also possible that he (or even later owners) added the interior mantels and trim work over time, updating the interior more completely to the increasingly popular Federal style. There are even some mantels that are more exaggerated in their extreme elongation and may have been added even later by subsequent owners.

The deeds and early records do not unravel the mystery of the house's precise construction date or the exact chronology of its interior physical development over the early 19th century. However, the physical and stylistic evidence supports the conclusion that the house was built c. 1802 and that all its fine interior decorative features had been added by 1830. In all, the Joseph Fessenden house represents a very fine early Vermont home with an extraordinary collection of woodwork and masonry.

Some of the house's interior features are similar to those found in early taverns, like the wide board wainscoting in the two rear rooms of the first floor, the large ballroom on the second floor, the large double cooking hearths served by early dumbwaiters. The two kitchens could have served the tavern-like dining rooms above, though these cooking hearths were quite elaborate for the time and may have been installed a bit later in the existing chimneys to facilitate the house's later use as a double. They even bear a striking resemblance to plates depicting a "Rumford Roaster" hearth system (minus the roaster itself) from an 1827 edition of Asher Benjamin's *American Builder's Companion*. Royalton did have a master mason and carpenter capable of such work in the first decades of the 19th century. Amasa Dutton is credited with building several brick and frame buildings in Royalton including the 1816 "brick store."

Overall, the features mentioned above taken in combination with the house's size and prominent location at an important early crossroads have given rise to a theory that it may have been built as a tavern. This theory deserves some exploration here. Based on Lovejoy's history and backed up by deed references, Elkanah Stevens had an early inn in Royalton Village around 1796 that is not apparently extant today. According to deeds for adjoining parcels, it appears to have been located either on the Joseph Fessenden house lot or – more likely- on the lot to the northwest where the Cascadnac

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Inn would later stand. Stevens's inn was said to be located on the 252 rod piece he purchased in the vicinity of the Lyman fordway which was near the present River Street Bridge. Stevens also had a store and was generally a promoter and developer of early village enterprises. The corner on which the Joseph Fessenden house stands was a very prominent crossroads of the White River Turnpike and the Woodstock/Royalton Turnpike, all chartered around 1800. An enterprising local businessman, like Stevens might have anticipated the building of these roads and built a tavern risking the strong competition from the well-established 1792 Gilbert Stand tavern just two miles to the south. In 1797, Stevens was the main proprietor, when "The Company for Locking the White River," was chartered to render the White River navigable by canals and locks from the Connecticut River as far as the Royalton Meeting House, which was very near his own holdings.

Overall, the Joseph Fessenden house is more unlike a typical Vermont c. 1800 tavern than like one because most of the known examples are quite plain and simple in contrast to the elaborate interior and exterior decoration of the house, which is far more characteristic of a fine home of the period. If indeed this house was Stevens's inn, it would seem more likely that Fessenden bought it as a typically plain tavern structure and later finished it more elaborately to suit his tastes and social aspirations. Fessenden, a merchant and later a printer and papermaker, is not associated with keeping a tavern in any of the available literature or documentation although he and his partner did purchase Stevens's store.

There is another, more logical possibility for the location of Stevens' tavern. According to the deeds, Fessenden's lot was bound by Steven's house lot and garden on the northwest. If Stevens's house lot also contained the tavern, then it would have been located next door to Fessenden, on the site of the well documented later Cascadnac tavern and inn. According to Lovejoy, the main part of the Cascadnac was built in 1810 by Stafford Smith but it certainly may have been added onto to an existing tavern structure, simply continuing the existing business. John Wriston's 1991 survey, *Vermont Inns and Taverns*, seems to suggest this too by listing Elkanah Stevens's inn under the heading of the Cascadnac.

Rather than a remodeled older tavern, The Joseph Fessenden house was most likely built by Joseph Fessenden in 1802 (as the scribbled inscription suggests) as a single or possibly double residence. The double kitchens may have been built by the young and single Fessenden to accommodate boarders or another family. Its interior finishes may have been added over time by the first several owners, explaining the stylistic progression in the work. The house is significant for its representation of the fine home

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of some of Royalton's most successful and prominent residents and may represent an unusual example of an early very high-style double.

The house's likely builder, Joseph Fessenden was born on January 17, 1777 in Walpole, New Hampshire, the son of Reverend Thomas K. and Elizabeth Fessenden. The young Joseph and his partner, Samuel Grant also of Walpole, started a mercantile business in Royalton village in 1799 under the name "Grant & Fessenden." On June 2, 1801, they purchased of Zebulon Lyon 136 square rods of land, beginning at the southeast corner of Elkanah Stevens' garden. According to Lovejoy, "Levi Bellows was then a member of the firm and with them on this same day bought 'Herrick's shop' a few yards west of their store." In 1801, Fessenden alone had bought of Jacob Smith the "old society schoolhouse" along with the parcel of land the house may stand on. The schoolhouse, which was moved after it was sold, may have been re-located to the 136 rod piece and used as the store. The Fessenden store is later referred to as the "red store". Mr. Grant quit-claimed the land he held with Bellows and Fessenden to Fessenden after a partnership of three years. In 1808 the firm became "J & J Fessenden." It is not clear who the other "J" referred to, but Joseph had a younger brother named John. Newspaper ads for the firm appeared in the Washingtonian published at Windsor, Vermont in 1807 and 1810 and list "Silks, velvets, shawls, and broadcloths" as well as "English, East and West India goods, books, stationery, medicines, saddles, etc." all "bartered for salts of lye, good butter, tow cloth, and geese feathers." A notice that the partnership of J & J Fessenden was dissolved appeared in the August 6, 1810 issue with the information that the firm would hereafter be known as "Curtis and Cutter." Joseph Fessenden married Sibbel Lane Holbrook of Brattleboro just two months later and then moved to Brattleboro, Vermont by 1812. The succeeding firm, Curtis and Cutter were made up of Zebina Curtis of Windsor and Moses Cutter, his Royalton partner, who would hold the deed to the Joseph Fessenden House in 1816. There was however, one last advertisement under the name of J & J Fessenden in December of 1811, which included "elegant robes, ladies muffs, and tippetts," and also noted "will furnish libraries at a discount." The last service advertised was indicative of Joseph's next career choice as a paper-maker, publisher and book printer.

Sibbel, born in 1794, was the daughter of Deacon John Holbrook of Brattleboro, who was a land surveyor, merchant and businessman. He had a partner in Hartford, Connecticut in a mercantile business, which prompted him to establish and support a flat boat from Hartford to Brattleboro on the Connecticut River – the main transportation route of the time. This allowed him to conduct an import and export (smoked and cured meats) business from Brattleboro with the West Indies completely by boat. Holbrook's other daughter Patty married Joseph's brother, William Fessenden, an editor and publisher of The Reporter an early Brattleboro newspaper, as well as printer and book

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binder. Joseph's eldest brother, Thomas Green Fessenden, was also a printer and publisher as well as a well-known satiric writer and poet. He started the journal *New England Farmer* in 1822.

Joseph had trained in Royalton with Abijah Burbank as a papermaker and after selling Burbank his house in 1811 moved to Brattleboro with his new wife and established that town's first paper mill. The paper mill started by Joseph supplied paper for his brother William's printing business. William died suddenly in 1816 at a young age. Deacon John Holbrook, who had retired and moved away, then returned to Brattleboro to assume charge of his son-in-law's business. Joseph Fessenden, also Holbrook's son-in-law, was ready to help run the business as Holbrook's partner. The firm of Holbrook and Fessenden was established and began enlarging the business in the paper-making and publishing areas. They built a large paper mill, later Vinton's mill, at the foot of Canal Street and the mouth of the Whetstone and the firm also started publishing and printing large editions of family bibles and other religious texts. The firm bought the rights to "The American Spelling Book" by Noah Webster which they undertook to print in quantity. However, it is interesting to note that an 1819 copy bears the imprint "Printed by John Holbrook for Abijah Burbank on paper of his own manufacture, by special contract. 1819."

Joseph and Sibbel Fessenden owned (and possibly built) a mansion and estate just outside the Village of Brattleboro along the West River, called the Woodlands, and later the White House. Mary Cabot in her 1895 work, *Annals of Brattleboro*, (p.425) includes an 1836 description of the estate by the Reverend Louis Dwight:

"...I never supposed that the place which you describe could be purchased at any price. I understood, when I was in Brattleborough [sic], that it was owned by a man of fortune, who had retired from the busy scenes of life to enjoy that beautiful retreat, and as I saw it was fitted up in a style of taste and beauty, which is not surpassed, in my judgment by any country seat in the environs of Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, and had such a profusion of flowers, shrubs, and fruits, why ! of course – as I supposed, no man of fortune would sell such a place. ..."

This substantial estate suddenly became available when Joseph Fessenden followed his wife in death (also of "apoplexy" like his brother William), in the fall of 1835, just as the newly formed Vermont Asylum for the Insane was looking for a suitable property to purchase to establish the hospital. Both Deacon John and his son, John C. Holbrook, were on that first board of trustees and were no doubt well acquainted with the estate of

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their late daughter and sister. This property of two acres and a two-story wooden mansion was purchased by the trustees as the new home of the asylum and immediately underwent some remodeling and minor enlargement to accommodate the family of the superintendent, some twenty patients, and other necessary functions. After Joseph Fessenden's death, Deacon John Holbrook was associated with the business of Fessenden & Holbrook until his death two years later in 1837. Later, John C. Holbrook moved the business to Boston as Richardson, Lord, & Holbrook.

Lovejoy lists Doctor Ebenezer Paul as a resident of the Joseph Fessenden house in 1809, while Fessenden still held the property, though Fessenden may have been living partly in Brattleboro. Dr. Paul practiced briefly in Royalton from about 1809 to 1813 when he died prematurely. He had married Elizabeth Woodworth of Randolph and their only child, Ebenezer C. Paul, Jr. was born in 1812, while the family lived in Royalton, likely in the Joseph Fessenden house..

The next owner of the Joseph Fessenden House was Abijah Burbank, Jr., born on March 3, 1766, the son of Massachusetts papermaker, Abijah Burbank. Abijah the father had moved his family to South Royalton, Vermont from Sutton Mass. in 1785 and his son, Abijah Jr., followed in 1787. In 1800, Abijah Jr. purchased the privilege of building a paper mill next to an existing sawmill on the White River in Sharon. By 1801, the mill was built and he was advertising for rags in the Windsor Federal Gazette. According to historian, Marcus A. McCorison in his 1963 article "Vermont Papermaking 1784-1820," the Burbank paper mill "became a remarkable training ground, as seven or eight early Vermont papermakers can be traced to this mill." One of these McCorison lists is Joseph Fessenden of Royalton. As noted above, after Fessenden sold his Royalton house and property to Burbank in 1811, he moved to Brattleboro where he established the first paper mill in that town. Abijah Burbank, Jr. and his wife, Betsy Foster, lived in Sharon where his mills were and did not appear ever to live in the Joseph Fessenden House. He was listed as "of Sharon" in the 1816 deed transferring the house to Moses Cutter.

Moses Cutter, born June 22, 1781 in Jaffrey, New Hampshire, had married Hannah Webber of Walpole, New Hampshire, when he began business in Royalton in partnership with Zebina Curtis of Windsor, who never came to Royalton, as Curtis & Cutter. Cutter was successful and generously supported the academy. He ran the Cascadnac Hotel and served in public office. When the firm of J & J Fessenden became Curtis and Cutter in 1810, the firm seems to have taken over or occupied the Fessenden "red store" and then, later, per a reference in the 1816 deed from Abijah Burbank to Moses Cutter, the brick store. The firm also controlled pearl ash and potash works where they could process the ash they often took in trade at the store. The

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dissolution of the firm Curtis and Cutter is announced in 1813 but it nevertheless continues to be listed until 1823. Combinations of Curtis and Cutter and several others are found on deeds in 1821 when real estate was bought and sold. They may have had a store in Bethel and later bought the tavern and brick house at Foxville. Cutter sold the property "with brick store on it" that he had of Burbank to Elias Lyman of Hartford in 1828. Cutter followed his sons to St. Louis Missouri, where he died in 1848. Moses Cutter and his family of five children appeared to live in the Joseph Fessenden House and he was listed as the resident when he sold it to Elias Lyman in 1828.

Elias Lyman, 3rd, (b. 1768, Northampton MA, d. Nov. 22, 1830 Hartford VT, m. Dec. 30, 1790 Anna White of Hatfield MA) was a very successful Hartford merchant and had 14 children for whom he built elaborate houses. Elias and his older brother, Justin, left Northampton when they were grown with the gift of a flatboat from their father and started work on the Connecticut River. They went into business together and established the extensive mercantile business at Hartford after their earlier store in Weathersfield burned with all its goods in 1796 (*Alden Spooner's Vermont Journal* Feb 15 1796). The Hartford business was located at Lyman's Point where the White River emptied into the Connecticut and was one of the first establishments in what later became White River Junction. The Lymans had a storehouse, meat packing and curing plant, cotton mill, brick factory, and other buildings in addition to the large house Elias built for his family. Justin managed the import and export part of the business from Hartford Connecticut and later New York.

Elias Lyman was a proponent and supporter of engineering improvements that would further his business interests. He built the first bridge in Hartford (1804) over the Connecticut River as well as a dam. He was involved in the charters and management of the White River Turnpike Company and the Company for the Locking of the White River from Hartford to Royalton. He was deeply interested in the improvements to navigation of the Connecticut River. As a successful merchant, Elias, was generous with his large family and built fine homes for his 14 children, like the federal style 1821 brick Lewis Lyman House and 1828 brick Willys Lyman house and law office, both in Hartford, Vermont.

Elias's son George was born on April 16, 1806, attended Norwich Military Academy under its famous founder, Captain Partridge, and then went into his father's business. In December of 1828, George married Minerva Briggs of Rochester and they settled in Royalton where he and Charles Dodd had opened a branch of the mercantile business in Royalton as partners around 1826. A clerk in Elias Lyman's store, Charles Dodd, married two of Elias's daughters, first Fanny and then, after her death, Anna. An 1827 advertisement in the *Vermont Advocate* (a locally published newspaper) for "George

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Lyman & Co." lists an impressive inventory of goods for sale at Royalton. Characteristically, Elias Lyman bought the Joseph Fessenden house in 1828 and, according to Lovejoy, "fitted it up" as a double for the families of his children, George and Anna. Although there is evidence that the house had always been used as a double, it seems quite possible that some of the interior woodwork including mantels and cornices which vary in style from Georgian to Federal and include several examples found in the popular Asher Benjamin books, were installed by Lyman when it was renovated in 1828. At the same time as he bought the Joseph Fessenden house, Elias Lyman was having a fancy Federal Style brick house built for his eldest son, Wyllys in Hartford. According to a Lyman genealogy, the builder was "the father of Charles Dana of West Lebanon." Elias Lyman, who died in 1833 and lived in a large 1796 Federal style house, is supposed to have said to his wife near the end of his life: "Now I have built or bought for all my married children better homes than the one we live in." (Lyman genealogy). Soon after buying the Joseph Fessenden house, a long standing lawsuit between Elias and his brother Julian over their joint mercantile business resulted in a judgment against Elias and the sale of much of their joint property. Although, threatened, none of the family homes including the Joseph Fessenden house were sold or changed hands.

Around the same time as he bought the Joseph Fessenden house, Elias Lyman also bought the "Brick Store" which had been built in Royalton next to the Cascadnac Inn around 1816 by Amasa Dutton for Jireh Durkee. Moses Cutter had had his store in this property as well. The "Brick Store" became a prominent local landmark in Royalton until it burned in 1923. George and Charles ran the Lyman store in this brick building for several years. George Lyman moved his family to Norwich in 1842 and then eventually back to Hartford where he purchased his father's 1796 homestead on Lyman Point from one of his brothers. George died there in 1879.

An 1841 deed selling the store to Royalton lawyer, John Francis, states that it was still occupied by George Lyman. The house and store were deeded from Elias' heirs to George in 1833 and from George to Job Lyman of Woodstock in 1839. In 1843, after George had left Royalton, the house alone was deeded from Job Lyman to George's sister Jane Lyman and then finally from Jane and her husband, Harvey King, back to George in 1851. References are made in the earlier deeds to "the dwelling house and store occupied by the said George Lyman." But the 1843 deed states: "the same premises occupied by George Lyman for a number of years past, now in the occupancy of William Skinner..." The 1843 deed also lists the outbuildings and property features of that time: "...house lot, dwelling house, garden, and orchard also a greenery building, a woodhouse, barn, and other outbuildings thereon..." This list of appurtenances remains

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the same in the 1851 deed. The house and garden areas are the only features from this list to have survived.

Presumably, William Skinner moved into the Joseph Fessenden house around 1842 when George Lyman moved out of Royalton, and eventually he gained title to the property sometime after 1851, but the deed has not yet been found. His occupancy of the property was lengthy and is referenced in deeds from 1843, 1856, and 1865, after his death. Skinner, son of Calvin and Sarah Billings Skinner, was born on June 10, 1807 in Royalton and on July 21, 1835, married Maria B. Smith, the daughter of Col. Stafford Smith. Skinner got his start by clerking for George Lyman in the very same brick store he later purchased. As a young man, he left Royalton to pursue his fortunes in first Rochester and then Bethel before returning to Royalton a successful merchant. Two of his children, Lucia and Sarah, were born in Royalton in 1842 and 1847 respectively, when the family lived in the Joseph Fessenden house.

Skinner also bought both the hotel and the brick store in separate transactions. He ran the brick store under a co-partnership called Skinner & Blodgett with Elijah Blodgett. Merchant, Elijah Blodgett was also in business with his brother, Perley in Royalton. William Skinner also bought the hotel and took over the management of the Cascadnac Inn from Samuel Blodgett, who was running it in 1841 according to an adjacent deed. Lovejoy wrote of him: "William Skinner in his lifetime of little more than a half century proved himself one of the main factors that made the Royalton of his day prominent as a mercantile, financial, and general business center [sic]." Skinner served on the board of directors for the old Woodstock bank and later became president of the state bank that came to Royalton in 1853 largely through his efforts. He owned a great deal of land in town including at one time or another, five farms and the land on which the railroad depot was built. He died in Royalton in 1862 and was one of the most locally prominent owners of the Joseph Fessenden house.

Dr. James E. Morse, who bought the house from Skinner's estate in 1865, came to Royalton after the death of his first wife with his ten year old daughter Emma. In 1867, the 43-year old Morse re-married taking Martha Jane Brockway for his wife and their three children, Sarah, James, and Jennie were born while the family lived in the house. James E. Morse was an 1850 graduate of Dartmouth medical school. Morse kept an office in the house and was likely responsible for changing the interior to create a separation between the rear entrance, where the office could be accessed by his patients, and the private family quarters. The second formal staircase leading from the rear of the first story was removed and a wall built in the hallway. In addition, a second door was cut in the rear study/doctor's office that led to the front portion of the hall. These changes have been reversed by the current owner. Morse had a very successful

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practice in town and was well respected in his long tenure as the town's main doctor. The Morse family lived in the house for 31 years, longer than any other family, and also took in boarders. The doctor's widow, M. Jane B. Morse, sold the house to Carrie Paine in 1896.

After nine years, Carrie Paine and her husband had moved to Massachusetts and sold the house to Charles A. Hanks in 1905, who owned it when Evelyn Lovejoy wrote her 1911 history. Thus the house became known as the Fessenden-Hanks house. The Hanks family was to live in the house for 18 years. Charles's widow Mary transferred the property to her daughter Hattie in 1917. Hattie, a seamstress, took in tailoring and other work while she lived there and is pictured in many of the historic photographs available from this time.

Later in the 20th century, the house was no longer owner-occupied. Subsequent owners, who did not live in Royalton, included the Wilsons, John Gibson, Merton Weston, and Daniel Abbott. Some changes were made during this mid-20th century period to allow for more tenants. The changes such as added walls, divided rooms, closed up fireplaces, and modern floor and wall covering have been reversed by the present owner. In 1944, a major fire that consumed the Cascadnac Inn next door also burned the Joseph Fessenden house barn and may have taken other small outbuildings mentioned in earlier deeds. The house was used as a restaurant, the Butternut Inn, in the 1970s and the "tap room" in the southwest corner of the first floor was transformed into a commercial kitchen with paneling shelves and a very large range. The room, including a damaged mantel, has been largely restored by the present owner, who started restoring and repairing the property in 1988. Today, the interior is as intact and well-preserved as the exterior of this remarkable house.

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Vital and Land Records, Royalton Town Offices

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Fessenden, Joseph House
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Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the Joseph Fessenden House follow the present property lines for Royalton tax parcel # S570, also known as 58 Bridge Street, located at the southwest corner of the intersection between the old Main Street and Bridge Street. This includes 1.12 acres containing the house lot, side and rear garden lots and two non-contributing barns.

Boundary Justification

The present property boundary, used as the National Register boundary, has remained consistent since 1948.

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Fessenden, Joseph House
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Photograph Labels

The following information is the same for all photographs:

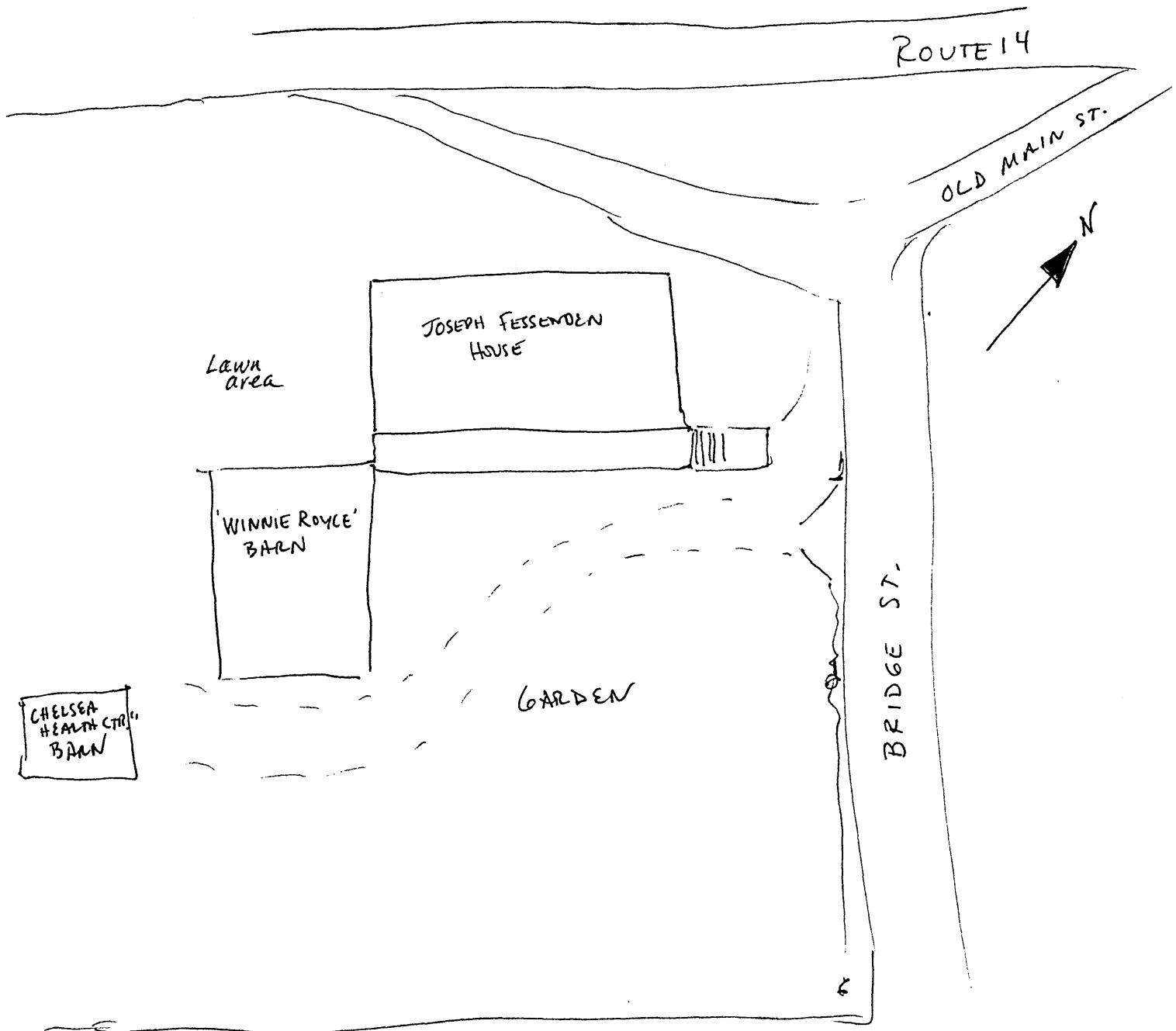
Name of Property: **Fessenden, Joseph House**
Location: **Royalton, Windsor County, Vermont**
Credit: **L. Papazian**
Date: **February 2001**
Negative Location: **Filed at Vermont Division for Historic Preservation**

Photo. #	View Looking	Description
1	south	VT Route 14/Old Main Street
2	south	Bridge St. intersection; NW & NE facades
3	southeast	Front (NW) façade
4	northwest	Rear (SE) façade
5	east	SW façade and Winnie Royce Barn
6	southeast	Detail: Front façade
7	south	Detail: rear porch & two barns
8		Detail: Iron railing off rear porch
9	west	Winnie Royce Barn & rear façade
10	northwest	Formal front door & entry, 1 st Floor
11	south	Formal front entry & stair, 1 st Floor
12	southeast	Rear entry, stair, & door to porch, 1 st Floor
13	northwest	One of two twin cooking hearths; Basement: east room
14	south	"Morning Room", 1 st Floor, north room
15	south	"Formal Dining Room", 1 st Floor, west room
16	south	"Study", 1 st Floor, east room
17	northwest	Central Hall & stairs, 2 nd Floor
18	east	"Ballroom" 2 nd Floor, north room
19	southeast	"Sitting Room", 2 nd Floor, west room
20	northwest	Paneled window surround, 1 st Floor, north room
21	northwest	Fireplace & surround, 1 st Floor, east room
22		Detail: Mantel 2 nd Floor west room

Fessenden, Joseph House
name of property

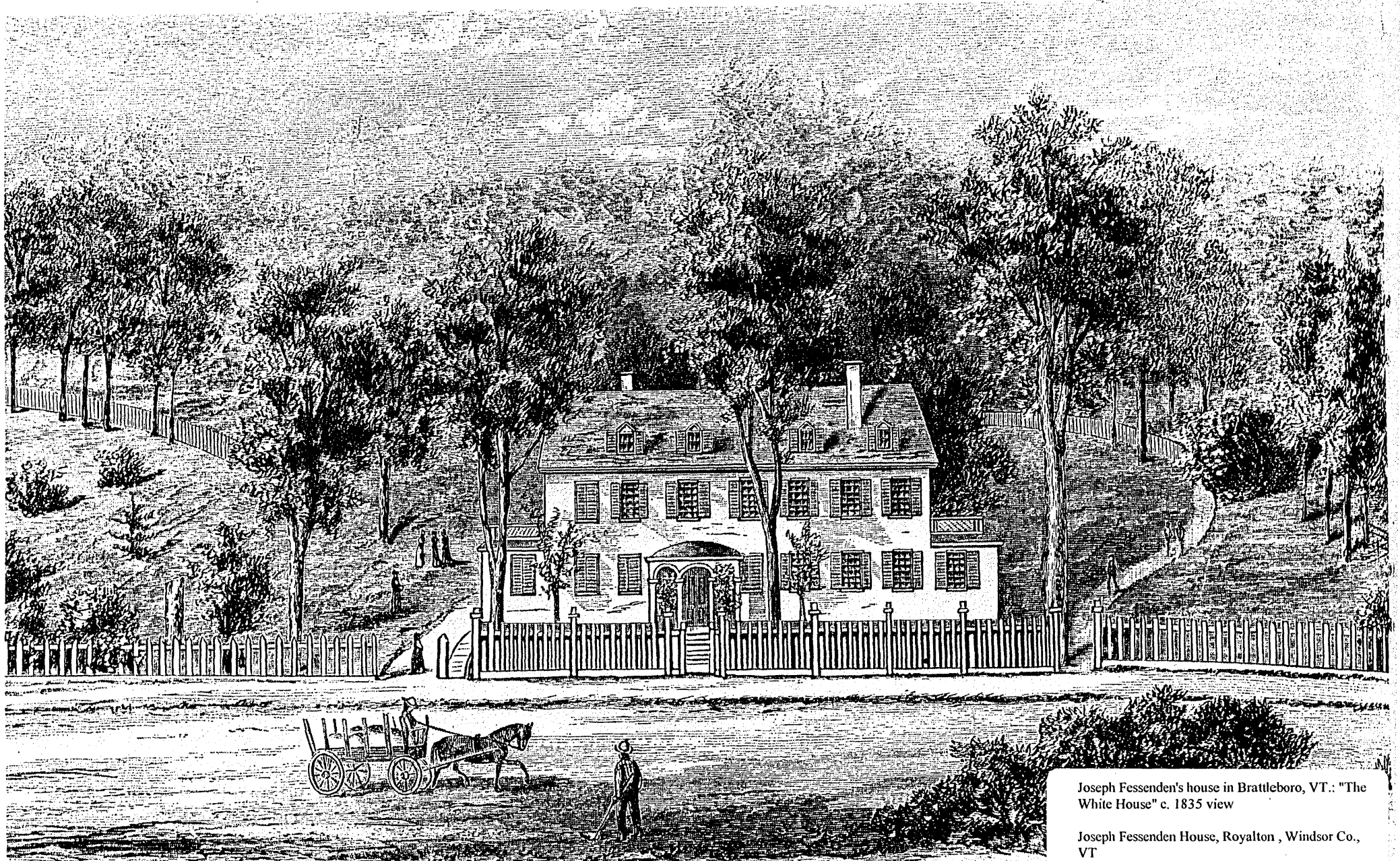
Royalton, Windsor County, Vermont
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SKETCH MAP OF PROPERTY
(NOT TO SCALE)



superintendent of the Connecticut Retreat at Hartford.

well was called upon. Whatever the project, he had tremendous energy and drive for the task at hand.



Joseph Fessenden's house in Brattleboro, VT.: "The White House" c. 1835 view

Joseph Fessenden House, Royalton, Windsor Co., VT

THE ORIGINAL BUILDING—THE WHITE HOUSE.

The White House, original home of the Vermont Asylum.



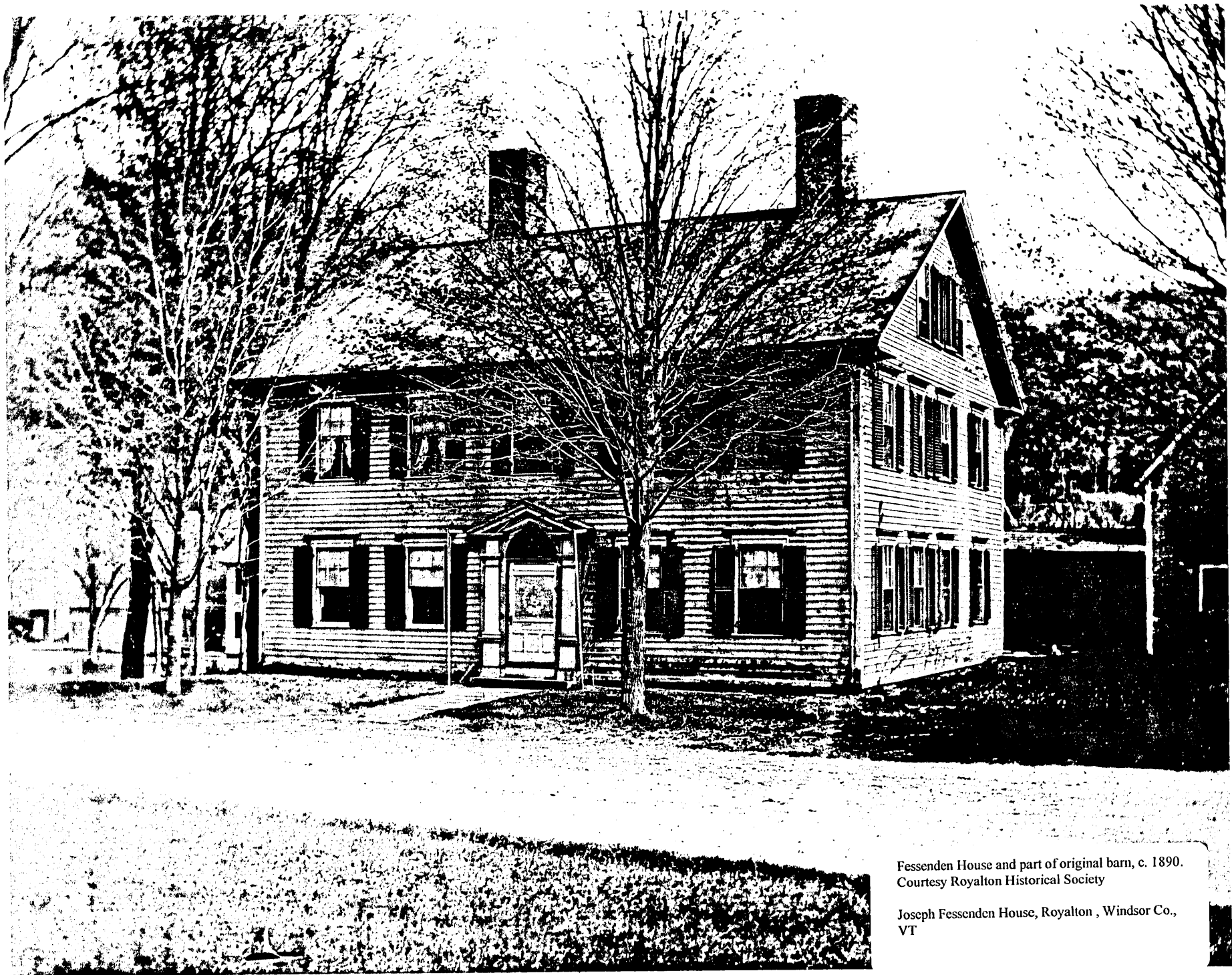
Royalton Village, c. 1860, Fessenden House on left,
Cascadnac Hotel next on right. Courtesy Royalton
Historical Society

Joseph Fessenden House, Royalton , Windsor Co.,
VT



Royalton Village, c. 1880, Fessenden House on left,
Cascadnac Hotel next on right. Courtesy Royalton
Historical Society

Joseph Fessenden House, Royalton , Windsor Co.,
VT



Fessenden House and part of original barn, c. 1890.
Courtesy Royalton Historical Society

Joseph Fessenden House, Royalton, Windsor Co.,
VT



Royalton Village c. 1900, Fessenden House on right, Episcopal Church on left. Courtesy Royalton Historical Society

Joseph Fessenden House, Royalton , Windsor Co., VT



Rear of Fessenden House with James Morse M.D., family and boarders, c. 1870. Courtesy Laurance Leonard

Joseph Fessenden House, Royalton, Windsor Co., VT

Mrs. J. E. Morse, 3 children + boarders



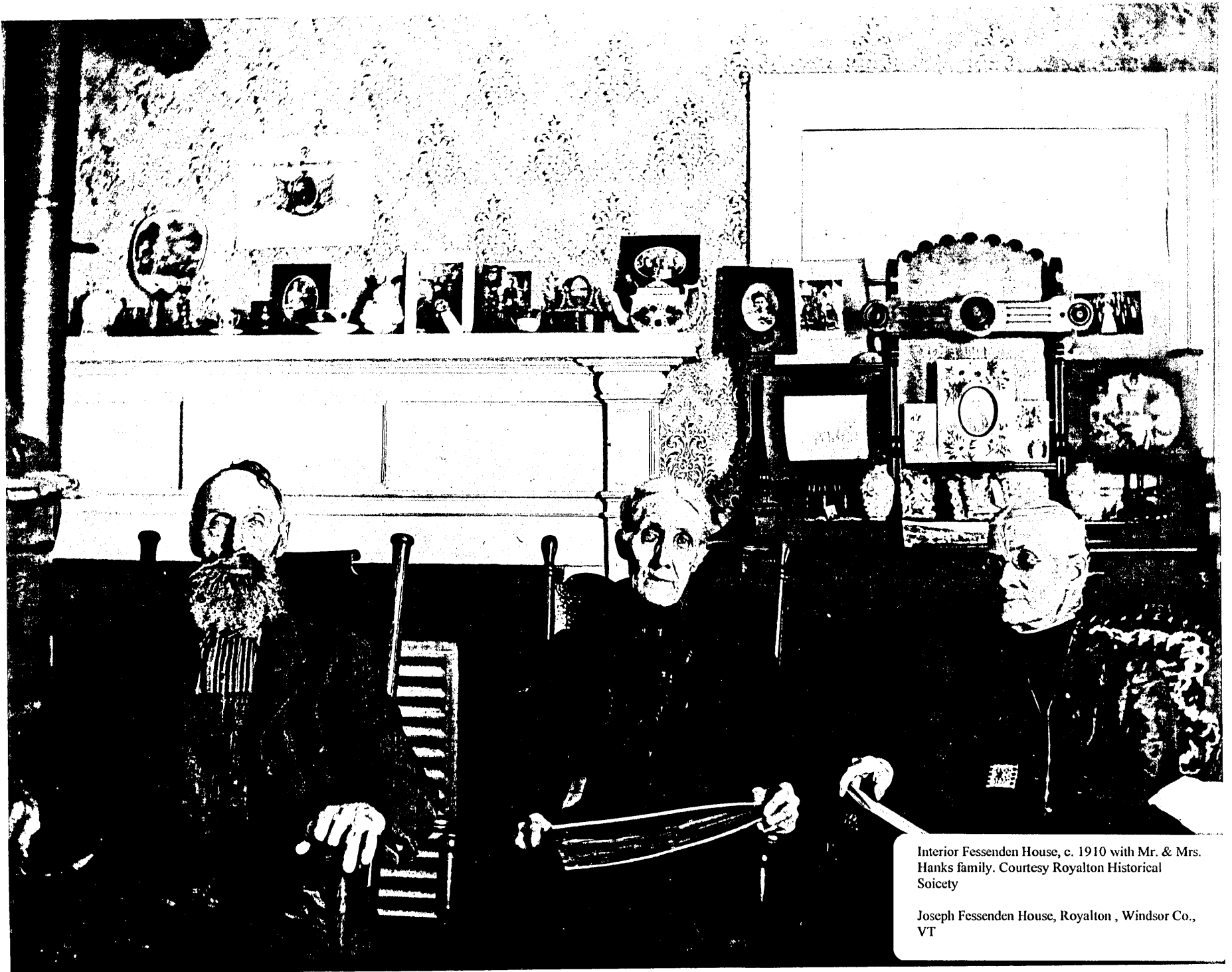
Rear of Fessenden House, c. 1910, with Hanks family. Courtesy Royalton Historical Society

Joseph Fessenden House, Royalton, Windsor Co., VT



Rear of Fessenden House, c. 1910, with Hanks family. Courtesy Royalton Historical Society

Joseph Fessenden House, Royalton, Windsor Co., VT



Interior Fessenden House, c. 1910 with Mr. & Mrs. Hanks family. Courtesy Royalton Historical Society

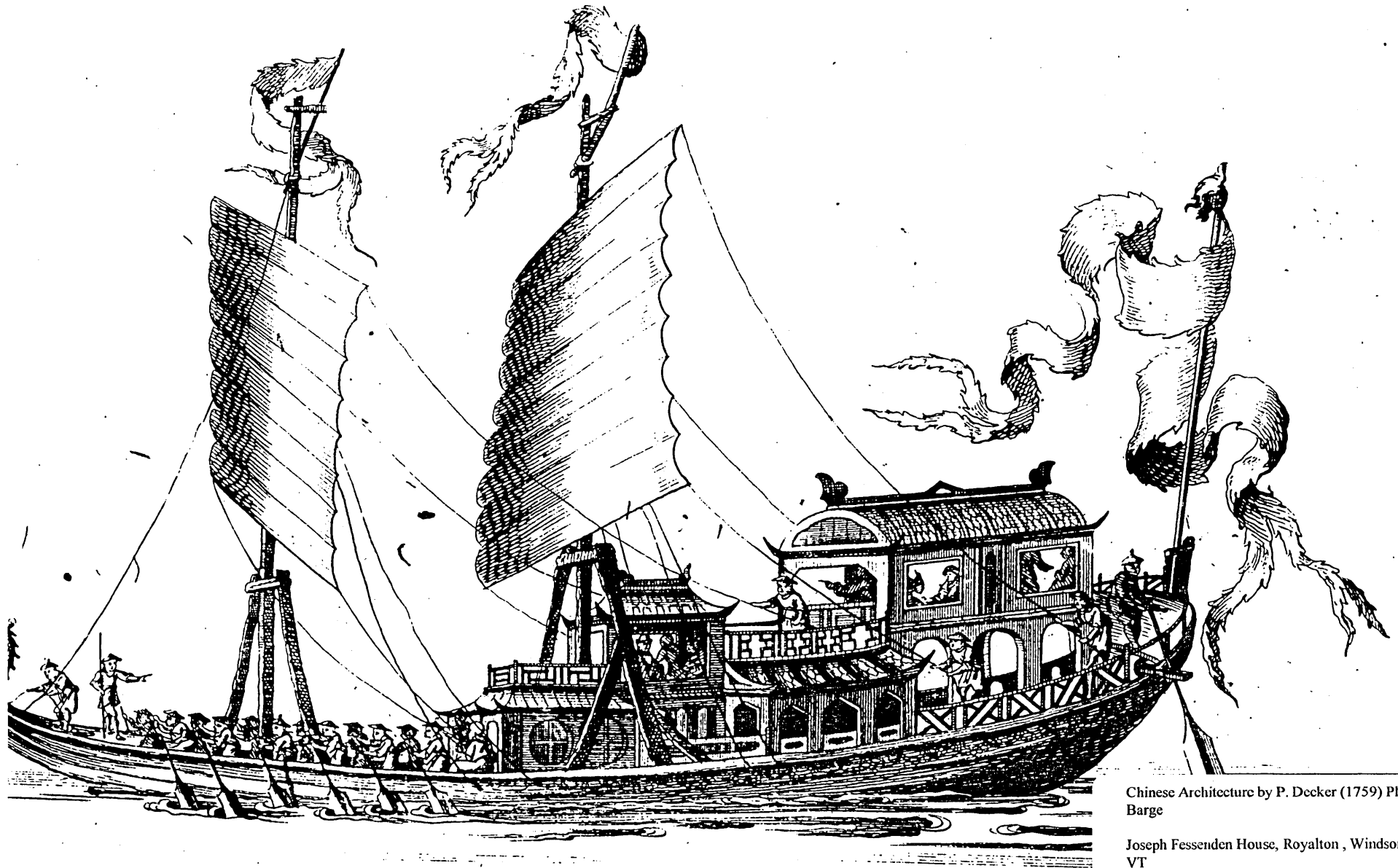
Joseph Fessenden House, Royalton , Windsor Co., VT



Detail Fessenden house door, c. 1920-25. Courtesy
Royalton Historical Society

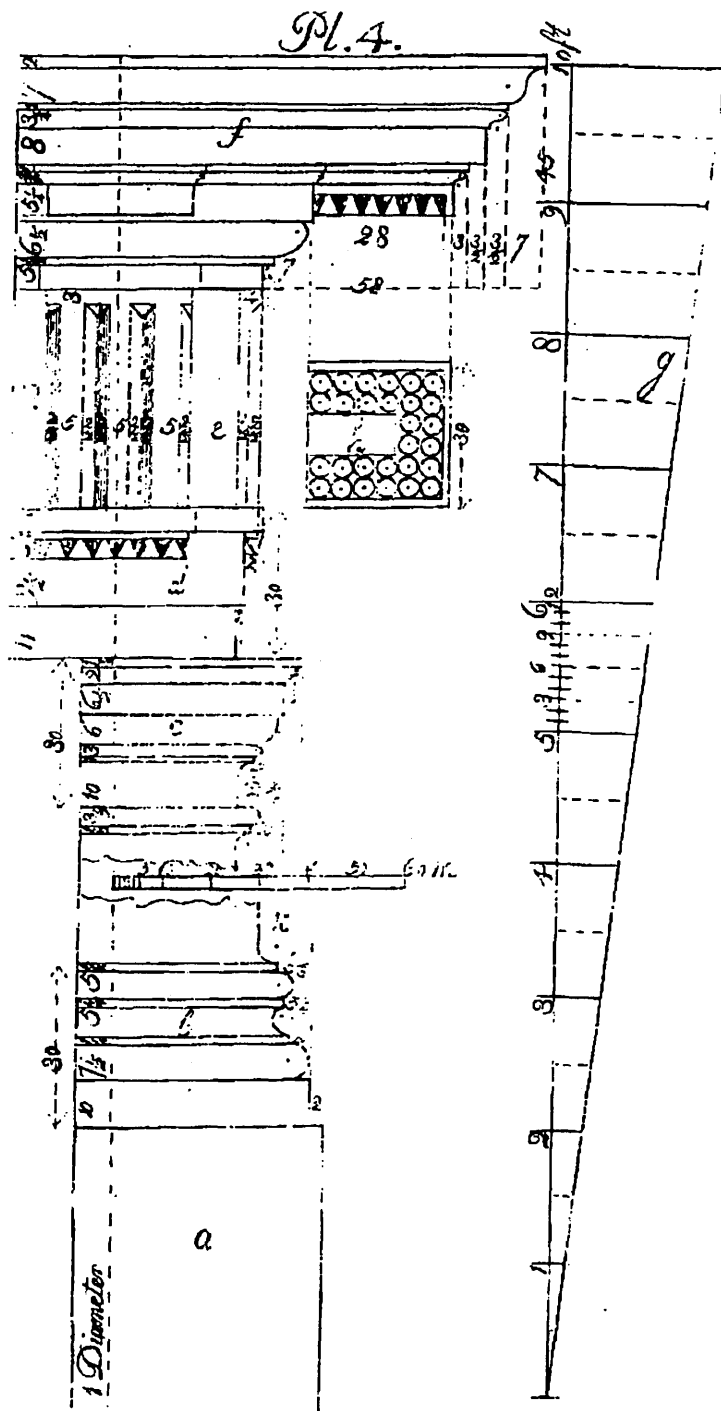
Joseph Fessenden House, Royalton, Windsor Co.,
VT

Barge with the principle Officers &c. Attending on the Emperor.



Chinese Architecture by P. Decker (1759) Plate 16:
Barge

Joseph Fessenden House, Royalton, Windsor Co.,
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P L A T E I V.

The Doric Base, Capital, and Entablature, with all the Mouldings, figured for Practice.

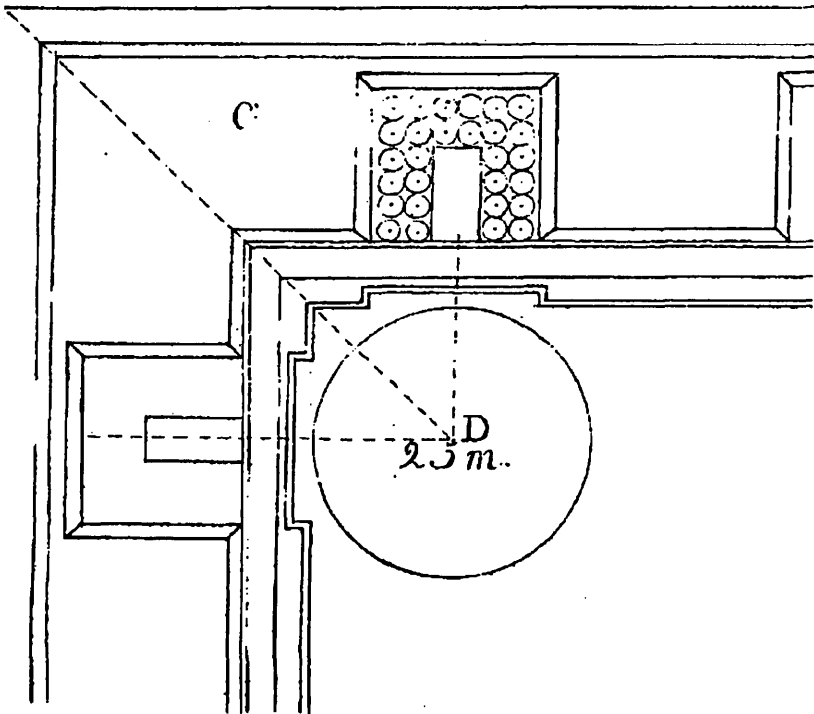
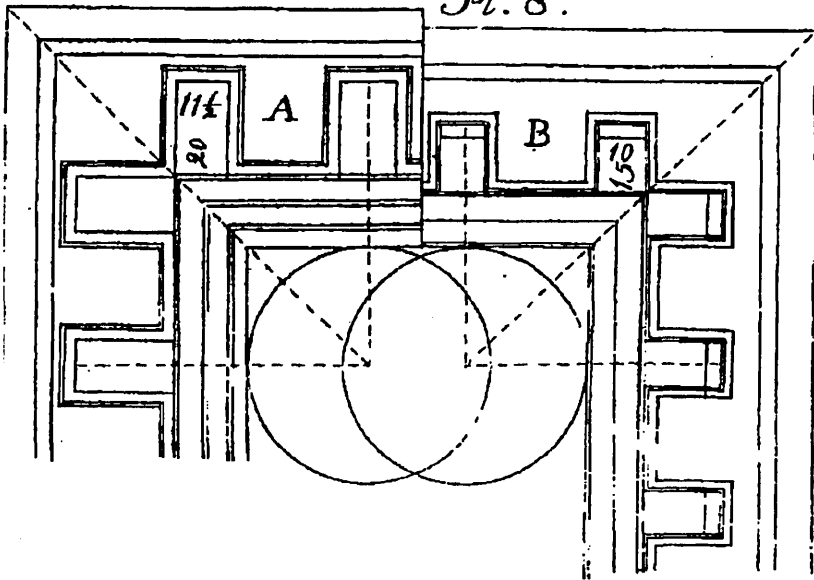
IN height and projection, the shaft of the column diminishes one sixth, that is, 60 minutes at bottom and 50 at top; *a*, Sub-plinth one diameter; *b*, Base to column, 30 minutes; *c*, Capital, 30 minutes; *d*, Architrave, 30 minutes; *e*, Frieze, 45 minutes; *f*, Cornice, 45 minutes in height. The width of the Triglyph in Frieze, 30 minutes; the distance from centre to centre, 75 minutes; the interval between the Triglyphs, 45 minutes; the width of the Triglyphs, 30 minutes, is to be divided into 12 parts, each part $2\frac{1}{2}$ minutes, that is, $2\frac{1}{2}$ minutes to each semi gutter, and 5 minutes to each filler, as figured, the profile or thickness of the Triglyph, is $3\frac{1}{2}$ minutes, $2\frac{1}{2}$ minutes to the depth of each gutter and one to the bottom.

IN Intercolumniations, for Porticoes, Colonades, Arcades, &c. due regard must be had to the number of Triglyphs and Mutules between the central line of Columns in the Doric Order, 3 diameters 45 minutes, take 3 Triglyphs; 5 diameters take 4 Triglyphs; 6 diameters 15 minutes, take 5 Triglyphs; 7 diameters 30 minutes, take 6 Triglyphs; 8 diameters 45 minutes, take 7 Triglyphs, &c.

Country Builder's Assistant by Asher Benjamin
(1797), Plate IV

Joseph Fessenden House, Royalton, Windsor Co.,
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Pl. 8.



P L A T E V I I I .

FIGURE A, Plancere of the Corinthian Cornice.

FIG. B, Plancere of the Ionic Cornice.

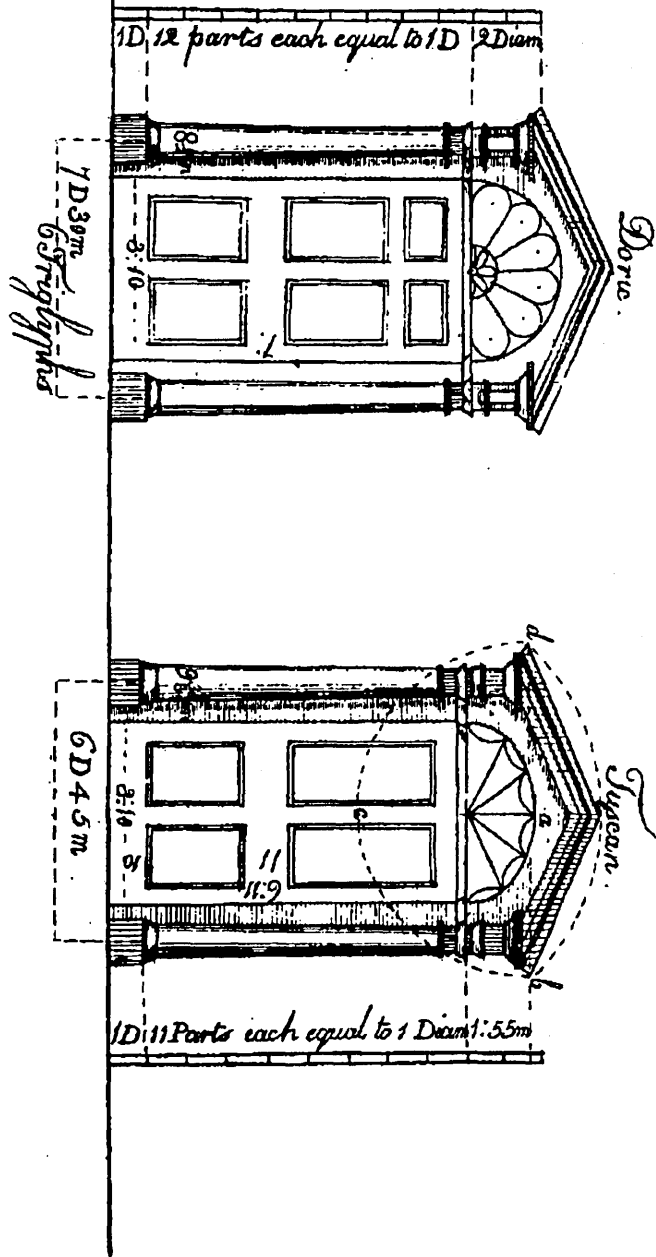
FIG. C, Plancere of the Doric Cornice.

FIG. D, Neck of Column.

Country Builder's Assistant by Asher Benjamin
(1797), Plate VIII

Joseph Fessenden House, Royalton, Windsor Co.,
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Pl. 10.



P L A T E X.

TUSCAN Front, drawn one quarter of an inch to a foot, the clear passage 3 feet 10 inches, the height 6 feet 11 inches, the height of column 7 feet 1 inch, to be divided into 9 equal parts, one of which parts will be the diameter of the column at bottom; give one of them parts to the Sub-plinth; the distance from centre to centre of the column is 6 diameters and 45 minutes. To find the pitch of the Pediment, set the compasses at *a*, in the Tympan of the Pediment *d', e, b*, and draw the arch line *b, c, d*; then set the compasses at *c*, and draw the arch line *d, e, b*, which gives the height of the Pediment at *e*. This method gives the pitch to any Pediment.

DORIC Front, the clear passage 3 feet 10 inches, door 7 feet high; divide the height of the column into 10 parts, one of which is the diameter of the column; give one diameter to the Sub-plinth, and two to the Entablature; the distance from centre to centre of the columns, is 7 diameters and 30 minutes, which will take 6 Triglyphs.

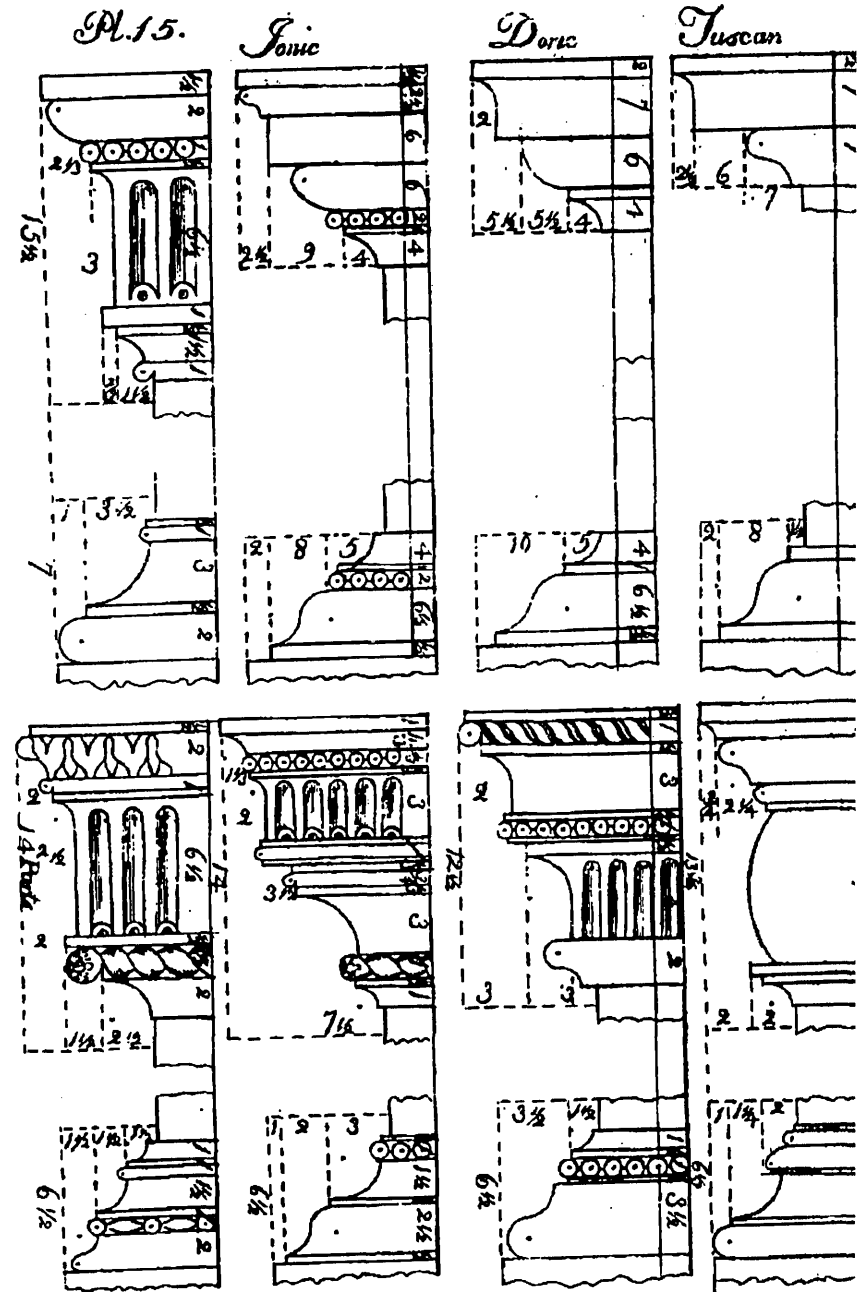
Country Builder's Assistant by Asher Benjamin
(1797), Plate X

Joseph Fessenden House, Royalton, Windsor Co.,
VT

P L A T E XV.

On this Plate is the Tuscan, Doric, and Ionic Pedestal Mouldings, which may be drawn from the same scale, that you draw the orders from.

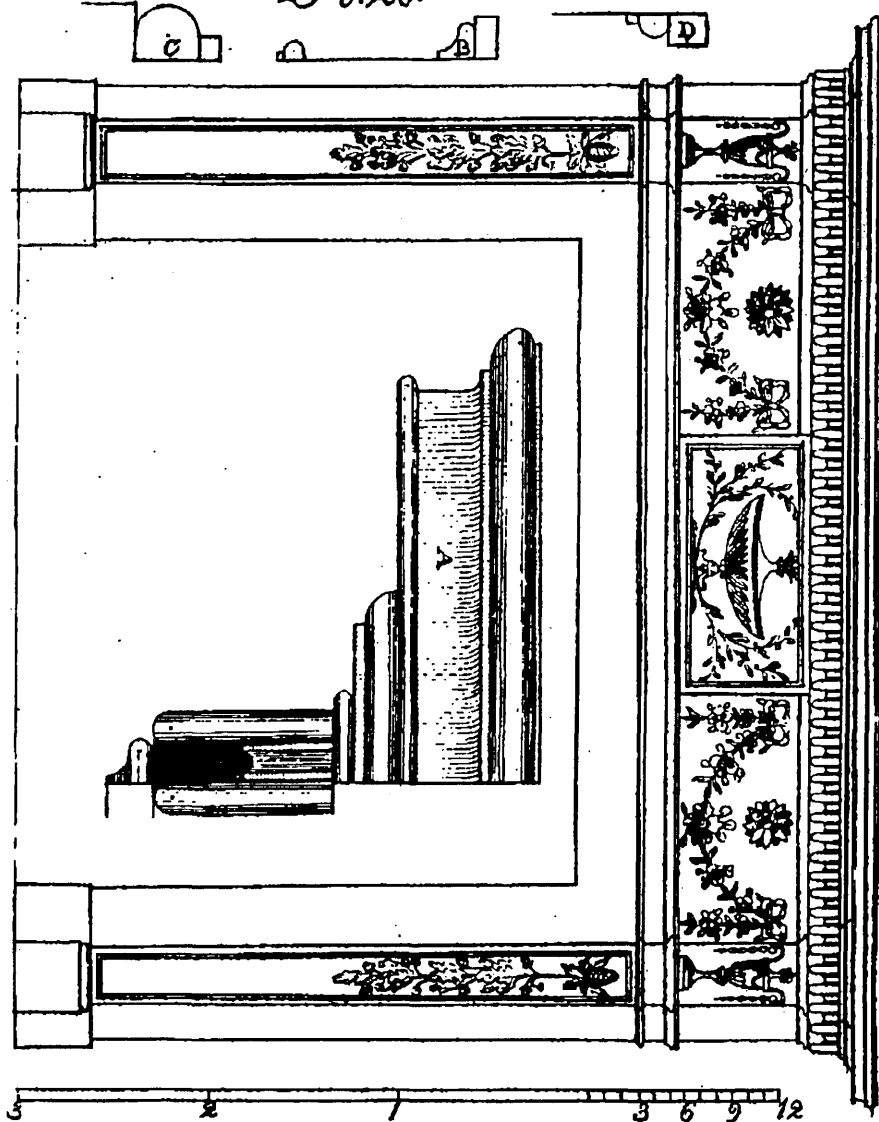
TO proportion Base and Surbase Mouldings, to the Pedestal parts of Rooms, the height from two feet six inches, to two feet ten inches to top of the capping, divide the height into nine or ten parts ; give one to the Surbase, one half or two thirds to the Base Mouldings, and one and one third to the Plinth : Or, Suppose the Surbase to be two feet eight inches from the floor, the Surbase will be three inches and one half, the Base one inch and three quarters, the Plinth 4, or 5 inches. Divide the one ninth, or the $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches into as many parts as are contained in the Surbase you make use of, and dispose those parts to the Mouldings, in height and projection, as figured on the Plate ; and likewise the one half, or one inch and three quarters, to be divided into as many parts as the Base Moulding you make use of, and those parts to be disposed to the Mouldings, in height and projection, as figured on the Plate.



Country Builder's Assistant by Asher Benjamin
(1797), Plate XV

Joseph Fessenden House, Royalton, Windsor Co.,
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Pl. 20.

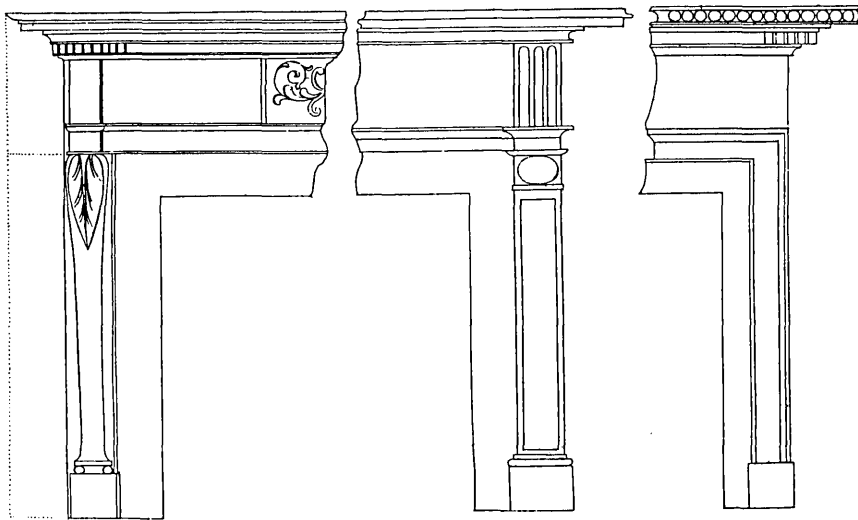
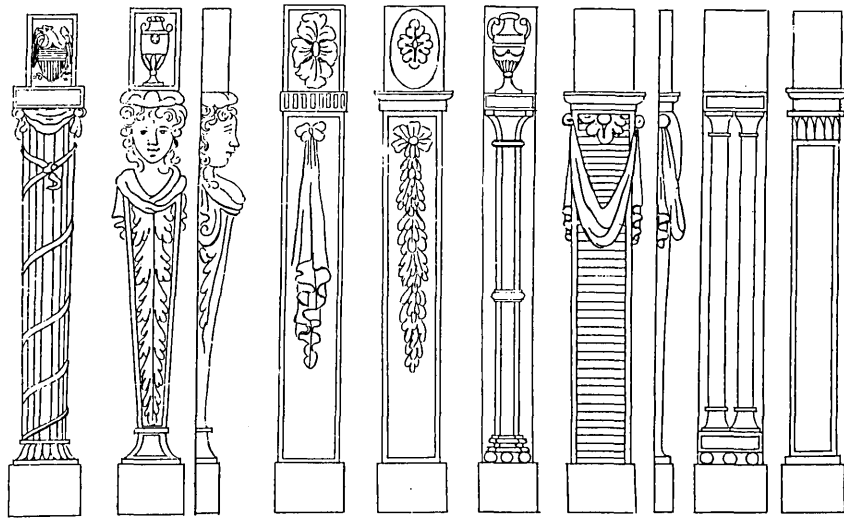


P L A T E XX.

- A, CORNICE, half size.
- B, Necking to Pelaster, do.
- C, Base to Pelaster, do.
- D, The Moulding and Sinking of Pelaster, do.

Country Builder's Assistant by Asher Benjamin
(1797), Plate XX

Joseph Fessenden House, Royalton, Windsor Co.,
VT



Raymond DeLo

Wightman Jr.

PLATE XXXVII.

Contains eleven designs for chimney pieces ; some of which are plain, and some ornamental. Care should be taken, however, not to overload them with ornaments, as they are exposed and liable to be broken. The proportion of chimneypieces I am obliged to leave to the judgment of the workmen ; for, in my opinion, no exact rule can be laid down that will answer for every room. A room, however small, must have a fire place large enough to be useful, and should the same proportion be used in a room twenty feet high, and large in proportion, it would be so large as not to look well, and be too high in the opening for the smoke to ascend without spreading into the room. It will be found by Count Rumford's experiments, that the nearer the throat of the chimney is to the fire the better the draft. The smallest opening should never be less than two feet nine inches in height, and the largest ought not to be higher than three feet two inches, but two feet eleven inches will be found to be a useful height for common rooms, and the width may be about four feet.

American Builder's Companion by Asher Benjamin
 (1827 ed.) Plate XXXVII

Joseph Fessenden House, Royalton, Windsor Co.,
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**PLATE XLIII.
DESCRIPTION OF STAIRS.**

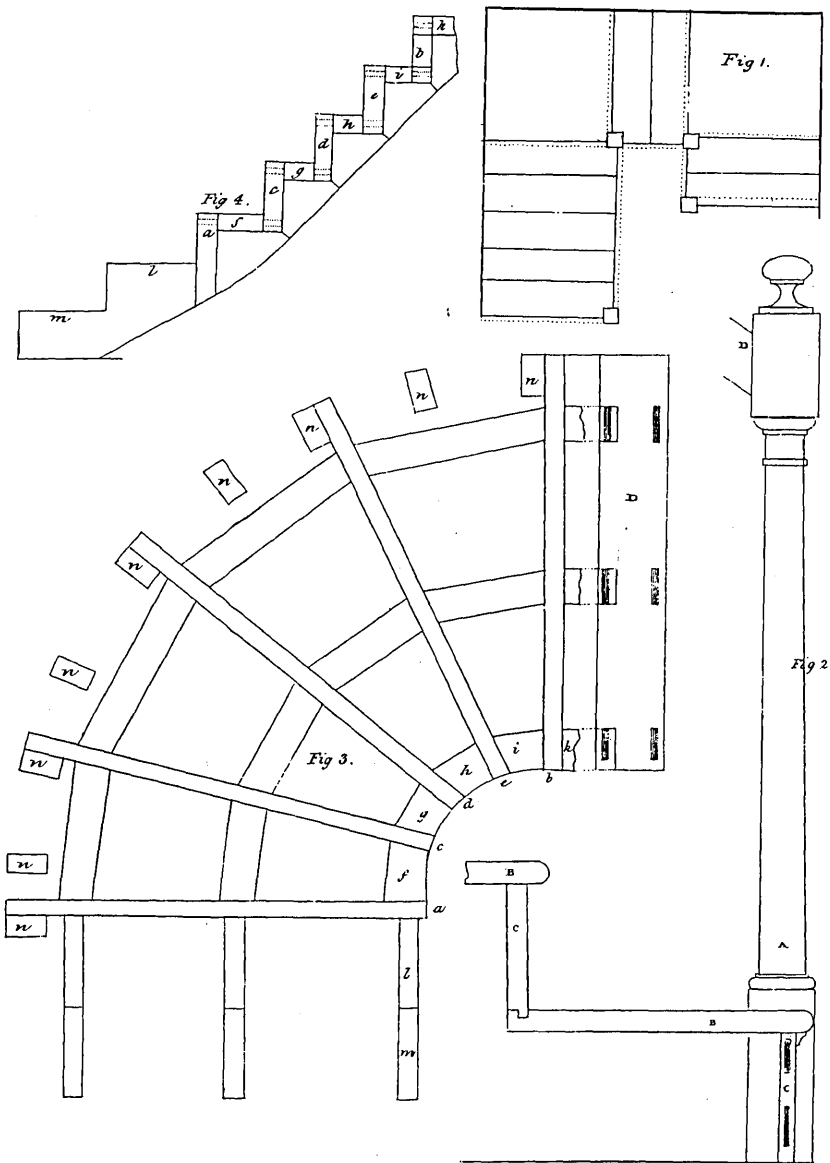


FIG. 1.

Shows the manner of placing newels. They always ought to be placed so as to cause the extreme part of the nosing of the step to be flush with them, as they are represented by the dotted lines on the plate.

FIG. 2.

A is a newel for a plain staircase. D Side view of hand rail. B and B Sections of steps. C and C Section of risers.

FIG. 3.

Shows the manner of framing carriages to circular stairs. a c d e b are the ends of the plank riser. D is a side view of a plank riser. The shaded parts are the mortises to receive the tenons of k, &c. n n n n n n n n are sections of open plank partition.

FIG. 4.

Is an elevation of fig. 3, with the circular part stretched out. a c d e and b are the end views of the plank risers, and f g h i k, side views of f g h i k, in fig. 3, the dotted lines show both mortises and tenons to a f c g d h e i b and k. l m are the sections of a stringboard made of plank, of which l m in fig. 4 is a side view.

A Benjamin Drl.

Wightman Jr.

American Builder's Companion by Asher Benjamin
(1827 ed.) Plate XLIII

Joseph Fessenden House, Royalton, Windsor Co.,
VT

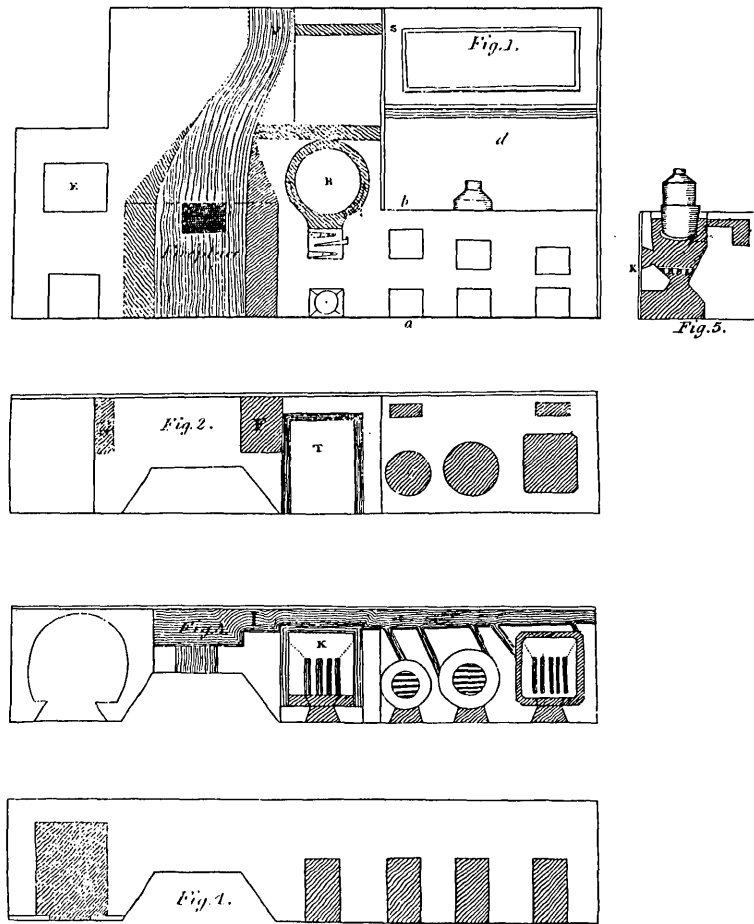


PLATE LIX.

METHOD OF BUILDING KITCHEN FIREPLACES WITH RUMFORD'S ROASTERS AND BOILERS.

FIG. 1.

Represents a front view or elevation of a kitchen fireplace, common brick oven, Rumford roaster and doors to the boilers.

N. B. The height of this brick work from the hearth *a*, to the top *b*, is two feet ten inches.

The space above the boilers *d*, represents a sliding shutter, hanging by weights, to slide up and down, and close in the steam of the boilers.

S, at the dotted lines, is the passage for the steam to go off into the chimney.

R, represents the front of the roaster, with its flues for the smoke to pass round the cylinder into the chimney.

E, represents the front of the oven.

FIG. 2.

Represents boilers with the brick work closed round the rims, and two stoppers for clearing out the soot of the canal.

F, in fig. 1 and 2, represents flue of fireplace.

G, flue of oven.

T, inside of roaster with its flues; mark out the dot at the back end where the steam tube comes in.

FIG. 3.

Represents the flues of the boilers passing into the canal, at the level of *K*, in fig. 5.

I, is the canal for smoke to pass into the chimney.