

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH0676713

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED **MAR 26 1979** **NOV 29 1979**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC **DEXTER, DAVID, HOUSE**

AND/OR COMMON

Dexter-Fitchburg House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER **Dexter Heights**

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Claremont

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

— VICINITY OF

Second

STATE

New Hampshire

CODE

33

COUNTY

Sullivan

CODE

019

3 CLASSIFICATION

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

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

C. Frank D'Amante

STREET & NUMBER

West Claremont Road

CITY, TOWN

Claremont

STATE

— VICINITY OF

New Hampshire 03743

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

See continuation sheet #1

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

NONE

DATE

— FEDERAL — STATE — COUNTY — LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT

GOOD

FAIR

DETERIORATED

RUINS

UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED

ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE

MOVED

DATE 1975

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Present Physical Appearance:

The David Dexter House is a rectangular two-and-a-half-story house. It has a symmetrical facade of two windows on either side of a central entry, surmounted by five windows across the second story of the facade. Both east and west ends of the main house have four windows arranged symmetrically on the first and second story with three windows contained under the slope of the roof at the attic story. The rear wall of the main house has somewhat irregular window placement. The roof of the house is covered with asphalt tiles and has two dormers on the south (front) facade, and one on the rear. The foundation of the structure is concrete below ground level, surmounted by brick which has been faced with rectangular granite blocks.

The center entrance of the front elevation has an elaborate doorway consisting of a very wide raised six-panel door framed by sunken panel pilasters with moulded capitals supporting an entablature. The entablature is made up of (in vertical progression) two plain bands, a moulding, a rope moulding, a pattern band of interlacing arcs surmounted by another rope moulding, a frieze of triglyphs, one rope moulding, dentils, and a moulded cap. A one-pane light occupies the space above the door. On the east elevation of the main block, centered on the first floor, is a narrower entrance, similar to the front entrance, but less elaborate, decorated with rope mouldings, dentils, moulded door surround and moulded cap. One other entrance exists on the back of the house.

Most of the windows of the house appear to be original sash, double hung, with twelve panes over twelve panes.

The interior contains many raised six-panel doors and raised panel Indian shutters on the first floor, in addition to a variety of late Georgian/Federal mantel pieces. Of major importance is the southwest first floor parlor which is an elaborately decorated Federal interior. Its focal point is an ornamented mantel with a center panel containing an urn flanked by swags and smaller covered urns in the end panels. The vertical sides of the mantel are decorated by foliate chains which are surmounted by a pineapple; the surrounds of the fireplace opening are faced with marble. The sliding interior shutters of this room, the panels beneath the windows, the doors, baseboard, wainscot, and door and window surrounds all have reeded decorative trim; all panels are decorated with reeding. The cornice of the room is made of wood with modillions, a band of reeding, and a frieze of incised lines, resembling a triglyph motif. The room and its ornamentation survive intact.

Original Physical Appearance:

Original ornamentation of the exterior included window caps of the same design as the front entry cap in addition to a cornice entablature that extended around the entire main house and consisted of the same decoration used in the aforementioned caps. The structure's original rear ell was removed to facilitate

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES c. 1790-1800

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Architecture:

Built on land purchased by David Dexter in 1790, the David Dexter House has a tradition of having been constructed over a period of years, resulting in its late Georgian and Federal detailing. Its elaborate southwest parlor and reeded, panelled stair trim seem to represent the last period of construction or alteration from the house's early history and are excellent examples of high style Federal interior design. The stair banister and its "echo" in an applied half banister on the wall side of the stair appear to be local eccentricities of design and are noteworthy features. The Dexter House with both its interior and exterior Federal details appears to be one of the last remaining, and highest quality Federal frame houses in Claremont.

Industry:

In 1790, Timothy Atkins deeded two parcels of land to David Dexter, then referred to as a blacksmith from Worcester, Massachusetts, and to Stephen Dexter, then a blacksmith from Newport, New Hampshire. The smaller of the two parcels was sold with dams and mills already existing (apparently for milling lumber).¹ Around 1800 Stephen and David Dexter built a dam across the Sugar River at the base of the hill on which their houses stood and constructed "grist, saw, and oil mills and a scythe shop."² The Dexters are credited with the establishment of manufacturing in in-town Claremont, whose later nineteenth-century development was completely dominated by industrial mills, the buildings of which continue to dominate the town. The site of the Dexters' mills continued to be used for manufacturing after their deaths and eventually came under the ownership of the Monadnock Mills, the largest of the mills in Claremont.

Politics:

David Dexter was a "captain in 1776 in Colonel Lippitt's regiment"³, presumably Dexter's title of Colonel was given as a result of his activities in the Revolutionary War, for there is no evidence of further military activity after his move to Claremont. Dexter was active in both local and regional politics, being a selectman of Claremont for thirteen years and Chairman of the Board of Selectmen for eight of them. He also served as a representative to the New Hampshire Legislature from 1814 to 1820, and as director of the Claremont Bank.⁴

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Published Sources

Waite, Otis F.R. History of Claremont, New Hampshire. Manchester, New Hampshire: John B. Clarke Company, 1895.

Unpublished Sources

Cheshire County Registry of Deeds, Keene, NH, Book 17 page 116. (see continuation sheet)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 1 acre

QUADRANGLE NAME Claremont NH-VT

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:15'

UTM REFERENCES

A 18 715675 48105900

B

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Brian R. Pfeiffer

ORGANIZATION

Historic Preservation Consultant

DATE

9/17/74

STREET & NUMBER

147 Brattle Street

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Cambridge

STATE

Massachusetts 02138

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

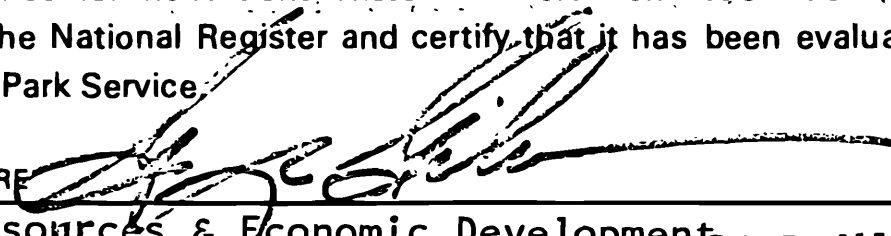
NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE



TITLE Commissioner, Dept. of Resources & Economic Development
NH State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE MAR 13 1979

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



DATE 11-29-79

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:



DATE 11/15/79

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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CONTINUATION SHEET 1

ITEM NUMBER 5

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Location of Legal Description:

Transactions prior to 1827 at:

Cheshire County Registry of Deeds
Cheshire County Courthouse
12 Court Street
Keene, NH 03431

Transactions from 1827 to the present:

Sullivan County Registry of Deeds
Box 448
Sullivan County Records Building
24-A Main Street
Newport, NH 03773

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moving. Asphalt siding, introduced in the first half of the 20th century, has been removed to expose the original narrow clapboards. Two chimneys of the main block have been reduced in size below the roof line. Some alterations have been made to the second story to provide for bath rooms; however, the house survives remarkable intact with details such as original hinges and shutter pulls preserved.

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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The David Dexter House was the focus of an intense and bitter local controversy over the Urban Renewal project which levelled its neighborhood and which also led to the deactivation of the New Hampshire State Historic Preservation Office and the dismissal of its first Director. The building was moved in early 1975 as a last resort when efforts by local citizen groups, the City Council, City Manager and City Solicitor to retain it in its original location were unsuccessful. When destruction was imminent (the building had already been vandalized), a City Council member purchased it and moved it a few hundred feet to a vacant hilltop site, just over the property line from the Urban Renewal project area. The effect of the move on the integrity of the building was to preserve the remaining original fabric, except for the immense masonry chimney stack and the ell, which could not be moved. However, the building was documented by the Claremont Historical Society and the City of Claremont (which commissioned an adaptive reuse study by a prominent historical architect). The loss of the ell did not significantly affect the main block; although interesting and potentially usable, the ell was clearly a subordinate service accessory to the architecturally distinguished dwelling. The building is now being rehabilitated by its owner for multi-family residential use, with the advise and assistance of the Claremont Historical Society and the City of Claremont. If the property is entered in the National Register, the owner anticipates applying for Tax Reform Act rehab incentives.

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Community Planning:

The David Dexter House and the brick mill building at the foot of Dexter Hill which was a part of the Monadnock Mills and is one of the oldest mill buildings extant in Claremont⁵, are unique in their preservation of both the scale of early manufacturing enterprises as well as the relationship of the owner's private life to his business. Later usage of the David Dexter House as a mill workers' boarding house (under the name of the "Fitchburg") parallels the expansion of the scale of manufacturing in Claremont and the removal of the owner from immediate contact with the mills.

The effect of the move on the property's historic integrity has been minimal, although some damage to historic fabric--particularly the foundations and chimney base--was inevitable. Efforts have been made to mitigate unavoidable damage, including the reuse of original granite foundation blocks at the new site.

The new site is not known to possess historical significance which would be adversely affected by the placement of the David Dexter House.

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Unpublished Sources, continued

- Colby, Elinor and White, Mrs. Perley. "Research on "Fitchburg House"
(so-called)". Claremont, New Hampshire: Claremont Historical Society, 1968.
- Garvin, James L. "Report on Two Early Buildings Within the Claremont (New Hamp-
shire) Urban Renewal Area, " July 31, 1974.
- McCarthy Thomas. Personal Interview. Claremont, New Hampshire. July 26, 1974.