

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

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

For NPS use only  
received JUN 20 1982  
date entered  
JUN 17 1982

1. Name

historic Fowler-Steele House

and/or common Ivy Hall

2. Location

street & number North Main Street N/A not for publication

city, town Windsor N/A vicinity of ~~Congressional district~~

state Vermont code 50 county Windsor code 027

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Douglas and Elizabeth Allen

street & number P.O. Box 75

city, town Windsor N/A vicinity of state Vermont 05089

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of the Town Clerk

street & number 147 Main Street

city, town Windsor state Vermont 05089

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Vermont Historic Sites & Structures Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1974  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

city, town Montpelier state Vermont 05602

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## 7. Description

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<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

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### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Situated in the northern residential fringe of Windsor village, the Fowler-Steele House (Ivy Hall) consists of a two and one-half story, gable-roofed, brick main block with a two-story brick east wing and an attached wood-framed shed. The house was erected circa 1805 for Bancroft Fowler in an unpretentious Federal style. A remodeling performed probably for Jason Steele circa 1850 gave the house certain Greek Revival characteristics. Its present appearance retains intact that blend of nineteenth century stylistic elements.

Ivy Hall faces the east side of North Main Street (U.S. Route 5) just north of Hubbard Brook. Recent commercial development separates the house from the concentrated village to the south while scattered residential development extends along the street to the north. Deeply set back from the street, Ivy Hall stands amidst simply landscaped grounds sheltered by a peripheral band of predominantly coniferous trees. The enshrouding ivy for which the house became known earlier this century has been mostly removed.

The main block presents to the street a four-bay west gable elevation distinguished by its Flemish bond brickwork. The main entrance - flanked by two-thirds sidelights and molded side trim - occupies the central bay on the five-bay south eaves facade, whose seven-course American bond brickwork matches that of the remaining elevations. The load-bearing brick walls rise two stories in height, above which the gables are wood-framed; the rear (east) gable retains its original clapboard sheathing and closely cropped raking eaves. Arranged with slightly irregular spacing, the window openings on the main stories are headed simply by header courses (now somewhat cracked and sagging) in contrast to the soldier arches used on the basement openings.

The Greek Revival remodeling of the house introduced several changes, the most conspicuous being the full pediment added to the west gable; the projecting molded cornice of the pediment was carried also along the north and south eaves. Inset near the peak of the flush-boarded tympanum, a semicircular fanlight with a keystone-molded surround probably belongs to the original Federal design. On the main stories, six-over-six sash were installed to replace the original twelve-over-twelve - one of which survives in the east gable. The remodeling also included a lintel with incised planar detailing added to the main entrance. Rebuilt brickwork surrounding the second bay from the right on the west elevation suggests that an original west entrance with fanlight was removed in favor of the present window.

Four chimneys stand atop the asphalt-shingled roof of the main block. Near the west end of the south eaves facade, an unusually placed chimney rises from the foot of the roof slope in an extension of the wall plane between the first and second bays; a similarly placed chimney rises above the north wall. On the rear (east) gable, an inside end chimney occupies the conventional position midway along each slope.

The interior of the main block is arranged on a Georgian plan with a central stair hall surrounded by corner rooms. Connected by sliding pocket doors, the mirror-image

(see Continuation Sheet 1-7)

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Continuation sheet 1

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northwest and southwest parlors retain their relatively formal Greek Revival decoration, incorporating splayed paneled window reveals, quirked ovolo window and door surrounds with corner blocks, and originally marbled fireplaces. The northeast room served as the original kitchen, dominated on its east wall by a massive cooking fireplace with side oven. Other rooms contain Rumford fireplaces trimmed with various stylistic details, including original Federal moldings in the second-story northwest room.

Attached to the rear of the main block, a recessed gable-roofed wing with irregular brickwork extends three bays in length and one room in depth. An entrance sheltered by a bracketed canopy occupies the left bay of its south elevation; the canopy replaced a nineteenth century full-length porch. The two-over-two windows differ in arrangement between the first and second stories owing to the placement of a cooking fireplace with beehive oven in the southeast corner of the summer kitchen. The iron door of the oven was cast at the Tyson Furnace, Plymouth, Vermont in 1838.

To the rear of the wing, the roofline drops again to the one and one-half story height of the attached clapboarded shed. An overhead garage door has been installed in the right bay of its south elevation while the other two bays are screened with wood lattice beneath semielliptical lintel trim.

Immediately east of the shed (but not attached) stands a larger-scaled, one and one-half story, wood-framed and clapboarded carriage barn. Its metal-sheathed gable roof matches the orientation of the other building units, giving the impression of the 'continuous architecture' prevalent in nineteenth century Vermont. The south elevation of the barn has been recently altered by the installation of two overhead garage doors and a flanking plate-glass window.

## 8. Significance

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

**Specific dates** c. 1805 **Builder/Architect** unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Fowler-Steele House, known also as Ivy Hall, reflects in its blend of Federal and Greek Revival characteristics the stylistic transition that occurred in Vermont domestic architecture during the first half of the nineteenth century. Located near Hubbard Brook north of Windsor village, Ivy Hall marks the approximate site of the first permanent white settlement (1764) in Windsor township. The originally Federal style house was erected circa 1805 for the Congregational pastor, Bancroft Fowler, and subsequently served also as the Baptist parsonage. Probably circa 1850 the house was remodeled for Jason Steele to its present Greek Revival appearance. Although converted temporarily to a medical clinic in the 1960's, the house retains most of its nineteenth-century fabric and its present owners have undertaken a thorough rehabilitation.

Traveling northward by boat along the Connecticut River, Steel Smith and family arrived in 1764 to begin permanent white settlement in Windsor township. The Smiths built a log hut just north of Hubbard Brook about a quarter mile upstream from the river. Other settlers followed and soon Windsor village began to emerge, its development favored by the available water power of Mill Brook, another tributary of the Connecticut River about a mile south of Hubbard Brook.

Reflecting the early prosperity of the village, the landmark First Congregational Church - designed by Asher Benjamin and entered in the National Register on April 23, 1975 as part of the Windsor Village Historic District - was constructed in 1798. Seven years later, Bancroft Fowler (1775-1856) became the fourth pastor of the parish and the first settled since the completion of its church. The lack of a parsonage caused Fowler to have constructed circa 1805 the Federal style brick house near the site of the Smiths' log hut, a half mile north of the village.

Fowler, rather than the parish, apparently paid for the construction of the house. After his departure from the parish in 1819, he deeded the property to the Congregational Society. The house remained the Congregational parsonage only until 1835. Four years later, the First Baptist Society acquired the property and during the decade of the 1840's it served as the parsonage for the Baptist parish.

At the end of 1848, Jason Steele (1789-1878) purchased the property upon settling in Windsor to become cashier of the local bank. The house probably received its Greek Revival style remodeling - represented by the pediment applied to the west gable - early in the Steele ownership. Steele "had a large circle of friends, and he entertained a great

(see Continuation Sheet 2-8)

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Byington, Ezra Hoyt. History of the First Congregational Church of Windsor, Vermont, from 1768 to 1898. Windsor, Vt., 1898.  
 Conlin, Katherine E. Windsor Heritage. Taftsville, Vt.: The Countryman Press, 1975.

(see Continuation Sheet 3-9)

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 2  
 Quadrangle name Quad. name: Claremont, N.H.-Vt. Quadrangle scale 1:62500

**UMT References**

A	1 8	7 1 1 3 7 0	4 8 1 8 3 4 0	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

**Verbal boundary description and justification**

Ivy Hall occupies a roughly rectangular lot of approximately two acres, described without dimensions in Book 68, Pages 211-12 of the Windsor Land Records.

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

state	N/A	code	county	code
state		code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Hugh H. Henry  
 organization Historic Preservation Consultant date February 26, 1982  
 street & number Green Mountain Turnpike telephone (802) 875-3379  
 city or town Chester state Vermont 05143

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature William B. Pimney date 5-10-82  
 title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

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

Entered in the National Register

date 6/17/82

for Delores Byer  
 Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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deal of company. He was known and honored throughout the State, and was one of the leading Congregationalists in Vermont."<sup>1</sup> Undoubtedly Steele was also aware of contemporary architectural fashion in the state, and found the rather austere Federal style of the house inappropriate to his social activities.

The renovated house remained in the Steele family until 1897 when a railroad conductor, Will Davis, acquired it. Davis seems to have devoted his efforts to improving the landscaped grounds, introducing rose arbors, lilac hedges, and presumably the ivy for which he named the house. Davis and his wife resided at Ivy Hall for half a century.

The house suffered its most disfiguring alteration during the 1960's when converted by subsequent owners to a medical clinic. The exterior remained intact but the interior was completely remodeled with modern materials - including acoustic ceiling tiles, wood veneer paneling, and composition floor tiles - applied over the historic fabric. Both parlors were partitioned into small offices and plumbing fixtures were installed in those and most other rooms.

Remaining in that condition until 1980, the building was then purchased by the present owners, Douglas and Elizabeth Allen. Immediately the Allens undertook to reconvert Ivy Hall to a residence, and to expose and rehabilitate its largely intact nineteenth-century fabric. A major task of the ongoing restoration involved the partial dismantling and reconstruction of the south facade wall to overcome serious structural cracking.

Ivy Hall possesses one noteworthy distinction that sets it apart from most other Vermont houses of its period and type: its unusually placed west chimneys at the eaves of the north and south roof slopes. In the Vermont climate, this placement subjects a chimney to buffeting by sliding snow, accumulation of ice, and abnormal erosion by water drainage, and therefore is usually avoided.

<sup>1</sup>Ezra Hoyt Byington, History of the First Congregational Church of Windsor, Vermont, from 1768 to 1898 (Windsor, Vt., 1898), p. 36.

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Marshall, Philip C. Architectural Conservation Audit: Fowler-Allen House, Windsor, Vermont, Burlington, Vt.: Historic Preservation Program, University of Vermont, 1981.

Wardner, Henry Steele. The Birthplace of Vermont. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1927.