

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED JUN 28 1979  
AUG 7 1979  
DATE ENTERED

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 Daniel R. Bigelow House

AND/OR COMMON  
-same-

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER  
918 Glass Street

---NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

CITY, TOWN  
Olympia

--- VICINITY OF  
3rd - Donald L. Bonker

STATE Washington 98501 CODE 53 COUNTY Thurston CODE 067

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

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Daniel S. Bigelow

STREET & NUMBER  
918 E. Glass Avenue

CITY, TOWN  
Olympia,

--- VICINITY OF

STATE  
Washington 98506

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Thurston County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER  
2000 Lakeridge Drive, SW

CITY, TOWN  
Olympia, Washington 98501

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE  
Washington State Register of Historic Places

DATE  
May 1971

---FEDERAL STATE ---COUNTY ---LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

CITY, TOWN  
Olympia, Washington 98504

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Daniel R. Bigelow house is located on the east side of Budd Inlet, an arm of Puget Sound. The terrain slopes gently down to the water's edge. The other houses in the neighborhood vary in age from turn-of-the-century to recent, and most are modest with small yards. Compared to the surrounding buildings, the Bigelow House is striking for its large size and the spacious grounds around it.

The address of the house is on Glass Street, a narrow lane which meets the banks of Budd Inlet about four hundred feet to the west. Enclosed by an ornate iron fence, the yard is notable for its sweeping lawn and two huge holly trees between the house and Glass Street. The Bigelow House has a cruciform floorplan, with the longer axis, which is parallel to Glass Street, running east and west.

Two stories in height, the house has a steeply pitched roof with strong gable ends on all facades. The siding is narrow clapboards. Fenestration is generally six-over-six double hung windows flanked by shutters. There are three porches on the west facade, each with an entrance. Above the central porch is a large balcony with a lancet arch over the paneglass door. This element and the decorative work on the eaves identify the style of the Bigelow House as Gothic Revival. There is another porch and entrance on the north facade.

One highly unusual architectural element is the foundation. The house rests on a "raft" of cedar logs. This feature, which is hidden by skirting, was discovered by the owner when plumbing repairs were made. The logs rest on bare earth with no apparent deterioration in the 125 year history of the house. They are huge, being at least two feet in diameter. The subflooring of the house is nailed to the logs.

The Bigelow House is still furnished with much of its original owner's belongings, many of which were brought around the Horn on sailing ships in the 1850's and 1860's. Included among these items are a square steinway piano, a reed organ, several davenport, settees, and many chairs and tables. Still used as a residence, the house is maintained in good condition by the direct descendents of the original owner.

The combination stable and woodshed, located to the north of the house itself, is still standing. It is a two-story rectangular structure with a gable roof and plain board siding. It was built earlier than the main house and was used as a residence while the house was being constructed. This building is now used as an art studio by the present Mrs. Bigelow and for storage of farm implements and other articles acquired over the long history of these structures.

# 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 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 checked="" 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

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of the Bigelow House rests on its architecture and, more importantly, on its association with Daniel R. Bigelow, pioneer lawyer and member of the first legislature of the territory of Washington.

The structure has been superficially altered by the removal of some trim, yet its original massing remains intact. The considerable height of the house and its steep gables stand out impressively, and the grounds are still spacious by modern standards. When viewed from the south and west, the high gable ends and the remaining ornamentation are still strongly evocative of the past. Built in 1854, the Bigelow House is one of the oldest buildings remaining in Olympia. The Gothic Revival style, common at the time this house was built, declined soon afterwards in popularity, and this house is one of the few remaining examples of that tradition in the Olympia area.

Daniel Richardson Bigelow (1824-1905) was born in Belleville, New York in 1824. He attended Union College at Schenectady, New York, and graduated from Harvard Law School in 1849. After a short period of practicing law at Belleville, he joined a wagon train and crossed the continent to Portland, Oregon, in 1850. The following year he sailed the schooner "Exact" to Puget Sound, arriving at Smithfield (Olympia) on November 15, 1851, and built an office the same month. The young lawyer also took out a 350-acre donation land claim for a farm.

On June 18, 1854, he married Elizabeth White, the first school teacher in the area, by whom he had eight children. The present Bigelow House was constructed during the summer of 1854 following this marriage.

Bigelow quickly became a leading citizen, not only of Olympia, but of the entire Pacific Northwest. In 1852 he was elected Treasurer of the newly-created County of Thurston and later served as Justice of the Peace, Auditor, and Prosecuting Attorney.

He spent the summer of 1853 in Salem, Oregon as one of three commissioners who completely rewrote the laws of Oregon Territory. Their recommendations were accepted by the Legislative Assembly and enacted into law. This reflects the prestige Bigelow had already achieved by 1853 in legal and political affairs. His name frequently turns up in the records of the Oregon Archives Division. This source shows, for example, that Bigelow was a petitioner for matters related to the definition of the boundaries of Thurston County and the establishment of Olympia as county seat. They also document his role in the George Bush affair.

George Bush was the son of a black seaman from the British Indies and a white woman. To escape pre-Civil War racial bigotry in Missouri, Bush joined his neighbor, Michael Simmons, in migrating to the Northwest. The party arrived at the southern end of Puget Sound in

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Continuation Sheet

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one

QUADRANGLE NAME "Tumwater"

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24 000

UTM REFERENCES

A 1,0 | 5,0,8 | 3,8,0 | 5,2,1,0 | 5,0,0

B    |    |    |    |   

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C    |    |    |    |   

D    |    |    |    |   

E    |    |    |    |   

F    |    |    |    |   

G    |    |    |    |   

H    |    |    |    |   

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See Continuation Sheet

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

J.H. Vandermeer (Historian)

ORGANIZATION

Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

111 West 21st Avenue

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Olympia, Washington 98504

STATE

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL   

STATE X

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

*Jeannie M. Wilson*

4/22/79

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

*acting Carl Shuck*  
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

8-7-79

ATTEST:

*W. Ray Luce*  
for CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE

July 30, 1979

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1845 and was the first to settle the area. Bush's farm prospered; he was generous to newcomers and became popular. However, the laws of Oregon Territory, of which the Puget Sound country was a part until 1853, forbade ownership of land to "persons of African descent", and this provision was used in an attempt to invalidate Bush's claim. Daniel R. Bigelow was a prominent defender of Bush's claim, and in the first legislature of the newly-created Washington territory, Bigelow, who represented Thurston County, presented a petition which asked the legislature to memorialize Congress to approve Bush's claim. The 1854 legislature approved, as did Congress. Bigelow thus played a key role in an important chapter of black history.

Bigelow's public service as a legislator began in 1854 as a member of the upper house of the first legislature of Washington Territory. He served several additional terms and outlived all other members of the first legislature. In addition to his role in the Bush affair, Bigelow championed temperance and women's suffrage. He was among those responsible for women voting in Washington in 1884 and 1886.

Bigelow was also keenly interested in education. He was elected Superintendent of the Olympia School in November 1853 and was president of the Board of Trustees of the Puget Sound Wesleyan Institute. This institution began in 1856 as Puget Sound Institute and was reorganized in 1857. Although it soon ceased operations because of a lack of funds, it represented the beginnings of higher education in the Puget Sound region.

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(R. D. Bigelow is also mentioned in the index as Daniel B.).

Berto, Harold E., and Catharine Bullard, History of the State of Washington (Boston, 1947). P. 106.

Denny, Arthur A., Pioneer Days on Puget Sound (Seattle, 1908).  
pp. 43, 72.

Hunt, Herbert and Floyd C. Kaylor, Washington, West of the Cascades (2 vols., Tacoma, 1917), Vol. I, pages 115, 134.

Meany, Edmond S., History of the State of Washington (New York, 1909),  
pp. 155-156, 164.

Newell, Gordon, Rogues, Buffoons & Statesmen (Seattle: 1975), pp.9-10, 17-19, 56.

Snowden, Clinton A., History of Washington (5 vols., New York, 1909), Vol. III, 111,  
167, 202, 230.

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Vol. 3, page 199.

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Lacey, WA Leader (December 10, 1970).

Tacoma, WA News Tribune (February 7, 1965).

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OTHER REFERENCES

Archives Division, Office of the Secretary of State, State of Oregon.

Snell, Charles W., "Special Report on the Bigelow House in Olympia, Washington"  
National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings, National Park Service,  
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Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Daniel S. Bigelow conducted on March 15, 1979 by  
J. H. Vandermeer

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That part of Bigelow Donation Claim No. 39, Township 18 North, Range 2 West, W. M., described as follows: Beginning at a point on the north line of Glass Avenue, 100 feet west of its intersection with the west line of North Quince Street; running thence north 169 feet, more or less, to a point 562.39 feet south of the north line of said Bigelow claim; thence west 80 feet, more or less, to the northeast corner of tract conveyed to Harold G. Bigelow and wife, by deed dated June 15, 1949 and recorded in Volume 240 of Deeds, page 291; thence south along the east line thereof extended to Glass Avenue 169 feet; thence east along said north line 80 feet, more or less, to the point of beginning.

SUBJECT to the use of the north 10 feet and the east 10 feet thereof for alley, and to the use of said north 10 feet for sewer and water lines.