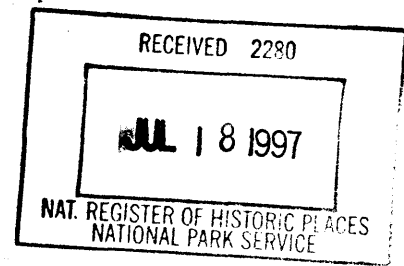


207

United States Department of Interior  
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

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 an 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

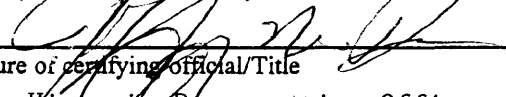
historic name Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages  
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number	4135 Bluff Street	N/A	not for publication
city or town	Fish Creek	N/A	vicinity
state Wisconsin	code WI	county Door	code 029
			zip code 54212

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Signature of certifying official/Title   
Date 7/10/97  
State Historic Preservation Officer-WI  
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 official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages  
Name of Property

Door  
County and State

Wisconsin

#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:  
 entered in the National Register.  
\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
\_\_\_\_ determined eligible for the  
National Register.  
\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
\_\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the  
National Register.  
\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
\_\_\_\_ removed from the National  
Register.  
\_\_\_\_ other, (explain):

*Beth Boland*

8/15/97

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

#### 5. Classification

**Ownership of Property**  
(check as many boxes as  
as apply)

private  
\_\_\_\_ public-local  
\_\_\_\_ public-State  
\_\_\_\_ public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

building(s)  
\_\_\_\_ district  
\_\_\_\_ structure  
\_\_\_\_ site  
\_\_\_\_ object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources  
in the count)

contributing	noncontributing
7	3 buildings
	____ sites
	____ structures
	____ objects
7	3 total

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

None

**Number of contributing resources  
is previously listed in the National Register**

0

#### 6. Function or Use

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling  
DOMESTIC/hotel

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/hotel

#### 7. Description

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian  
Late 19th & Early 20th Century American  
Movements

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation Granite  
walls Wood  
roof Asphalt  
other Brick

#### Narrative Description

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**

**Continuation Sheet**

Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages

Town of Gibraltar, Door County, WI

Section 7 Page 1

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7. Description

The Freeman and Jessie Thorp House and Cottages, constructed between 1902 and 1942 are located on a side street in Fish Creek, an unincorporated village within the Town of Gibraltar. The property consists of the main house, labelled 1, and nine ancillary cottages, labelled A through I. Most of the buildings in the complex are oriented towards the north and face the water, taking full advantage of the view of Green Bay. The property's landscape contains northern pine and birch trees. A low cut-stone wall is located near the southern end of the main house. The driveway and front walk are paved in brick.

(1) Main House Construction began on this late Queen Anne house in 1902 and was completed about 1904.<sup>3</sup> It is a contributing resource within the complex. The house is two stories high with an attic and measures 43' in width and 38' in depth. Its side-gabled form exhibits stylistic influences of the Queen Anne. The main facade of the house faces north and is oriented towards the view of Green Bay. The residence is in a T-plan with a cross gable roof. It has a cut granite foundation and the roof is clad in asphalt. The residence is sided in narrow gauge clapboard. The exterior walls of the house are outlined by pronounced corner boards and cornice boards. The front of the house exhibits a center-projecting-gabled ell. At the first story this ell is three-sided, has canted sides and creates a bay window. At the second story this ell is formed in a rectangular shape. At the attic story the ell forms a triangular gable. A gable-roofed wall dormer is located on either side of the attic story's projecting center gable, displaying the picturesque roofline of the Queen Anne style. Other elements of this style are seen in the center gable where decorative sawtooth and octagonal imbricated wood-shingle siding covers the dormers and gable ends. A shaped brick chimney is located on the roof above the east elevation.

The symmetrical main facade exhibits regular fenestration. There are four windows on the first story of the facade. Five windows are found on the second story. The projecting ell section displays a group of three windows. A large fixed window with a decorative diamond-paned transom is centered in the bay windows on the first story projecting ell. The central ell's attic story gable-end displays a small fixed elliptical window. All windows, except for the two fixed windows, are one-over-one double-hung wood sash.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**

**Continuation Sheet**

Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages  
Town of Gibraltar, Door County, WI  
Section 7 Page 2

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Two front doors are located on the east section of the facade, one is located on the east side of the first story canted projecting ell, (the bay). The other is on the north wall of the east section.

The facade exhibits a hip-roofed full-width front porch supported by six columns. The bases of the six columns rest on plinths. An unobtrusive porch railing with squared rails was added to the porch in the mid-1930s.<sup>4</sup>

The east and west side elevations each exhibit two evenly spaced windows on each of the first and second stories.

A recent addition (1990)<sup>5</sup> extends from the rear southeast corner of the house. This addition is unobtrusive and is obscured from view. It does not effect the understanding of the house as a historic building.

The primary interior feature of the house is the central boxed stairway with all the rooms laid out around it; the front parlor is to the east, the dining room to the north, (now serving as a bedroom), the kitchen to the south, and a second bedroom to the west. Access from the dining room to the parlor is through a set of French doors.

Displayed in the parlor is a maple floor cut and laid by Freeman Thorp in a geometric pattern of concentric squares. Corner blocks are located at the top corners of the door frames and acorn finials decorate the tops of corner molding strips and the junctures of baseboards. The parlor also includes a fieldstone fireplace with a sculpted chimney breast. It is made of "rock heads" (a local term for glacial granite stone used in chimneys and foundations in Fish Creek.)<sup>6</sup> The chimney's granite stone is accentuated by its beaded mortar. The fireplace was built by Max Schmidt, renter of the Thorp House in about 1915.<sup>7</sup>

The second story is accessed by the stairway trimmed in pine with two hand-turned pine newel posts. Five bedrooms and the recent addition form the upstairs space. Bedrooms are entered through doors having operable transoms. One of these bedrooms now serves as a study.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**

**Continuation Sheet**

Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages  
Town of Gibraltar, Door County, WI  
Section 7 Page 3

Originally the house had a cistern located on the second floor which provided running water to the kitchen. Guests used a privy in the back yard.<sup>8</sup> To accommodate modern paying guests, two bathrooms have been added to the second floor and another to the bedroom on the first floor. The interior retains a high degree of integrity and exhibits much of the design detail conceived and executed by Freeman Thorp and his wife Jessie. Seven ancillary cottages surround the main house. These cottages were constructed from the late 1930s through the early 1940s. They were intended for seasonal use only.

Cottage A, contributing, was built circa 1938. The cottage is a small one-story front-gable dwelling exhibiting a large gabled sun porch ell on the main facade. Facing west, the cottage is located to the north of and approximately 125' from the main house. It is two rooms deep and rectangular in plan. It has a steeply peaked gable roof clad in asphalt. Exposed rafter tails are displayed under the roof overhang. It is sided in cedar board and batten. The front door is centered on the main facade. Window placement is irregular, however, the sun porch ell exhibits a band of six eight-paned fixed windows. The foundation is not visible.

Cottage B, contributing, was built circa 1938. It is a small one-story front-gable dwelling with a gabled combination entrance vestibule/front porch ell. The cottage is oriented on the northeast side of the main house and is approximately sixty feet from the main house. It faces west. The cottage is rectangular in plan. The cottage is sided in board and batten cedar. It has a simple but steeply pitched asphalt-clad gable roof. Exposed rafter tails are displayed under the roof overhang. Three clustered screened windows are located on the main facade. Window placement is irregular. The front door is accessed on the north side of the entrance vestibule. The foundation is not visible. A window box has been recently added and is located under the front set of windows.

Cottage C, contributing, was built circa 1938, as a one-story side-gabled wood frame cottage with a small gabled vestibule on the north elevation. The cottage is located on the southeast side of the main house and is approximately twenty feet from the main house. The main facade of the cottage faces west. The cottage is rectangular in plan. It is sided in board and batten cedar. The roof is a simple gable and is clad in asphalt. Exposed rafter tails are displayed under the roof overhanging eaves. The cottage exhibits irregular fenestration. The front door is on the main facade and placed on the small vestibule.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**

**Continuation Sheet**

Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages  
Town of Gibraltar, Door County, WI  
Section 7 Page 4

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The foundation is not visible. A recent wood deck has been added across the north half of the facade.

Cottage D (currently cottage 3), contributing, was built circa 1938, as a wood-frame side gabled cottage. It is located south of the main house and its main facade faces north. It is approximately 60 feet from the main house. The cottage is rectangular in plan. The cottage is sided in board and batten cedar. The cottage has a gable roof which is clad in asphalt. Exposed rafter tails are displayed under the roof overhanging eaves. The facade exhibits a half-length shed-roofed sun porch which features a series of six windows. These windows are six-over-six double hung sash. The front door is recessed and is located on the west side of the facade. A recent boxed-in board and batten sided chimney is located on the east elevation. The foundation is not visible. A recent wood deck has been added across the facade.

Cottage E (currently cottage 4), contributing, was built circa 1938, as a front-gabled wood-frame cottage with an asymmetrically placed front vestibule. The cottage is approximately 60 feet from the main house and is located to the south of the main house. The main facade of the cottage faces north. The cottage is rectangular in plan. It is clad in drop siding. The vestibule is also clad in drop siding while its gable end is sided in faux log clapboard laid in a inverted V-pattern. The cottage roof is clad in asphalt. Exposed rafter tails are exhibited under the over-hanging eaves. Craftsman style three-over-one double hung wood sash windows are located in pairs on the main and east facades of the front entry. The front door is on the west side of the front vestibule. It has a stone foundation. A recent deck has been added on the west side of the front vestibule. The interior of the cottage contains six rooms: kitchen, breakfast nook, living room, two bedrooms, and a bath. A fireplace is located in the center of the living room and has a knotty pine chimney breast and mantel. The doors and the trim in the cottage are also knotty pine.

Cottage F (currently cottage 5), contributing, was built circa 1942, as a side-gabled one-story wood-frame cottage. It exhibits an enclosed vestibule located on the east end of the main block. It is located approximately 70 feet from and is west of the main house. The cottage faces north and is rectangular in plan. The exterior is distinctive for its half-round faux log siding. The roof is a gable-with-shed and exposed rafter tails are located under the eaves. The roof is clad in asphalt. Paired Craftsman style three-over-one double hung sash wood frame windows are found on the east side of the vestibule. All other windows are irregularly placed and are also of this type.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages  
Town of Gibraltar, Door County, WI  
Section 7 Page 5

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The front door is located on the vestibule's north side. The foundation is stone. A recent deck has been added across the east 1/3 of the main facade.

Cottage G (currently cottage 6), non-contributing, was built circa 1942, as a side-gabled one-story wood-frame cottage. The cottage is located approx. 50 feet west of the main house and its main facade faces north. The cottage measures 23' by 27'. The cottage is re-sided in vertical cedar boards, while the gable peaks display non-historic stucco (probably plywood) siding with decorative false half-timber boards. It has an asphalt-clad gable roof. Exposed and pronounced beam ends are located under the eaves. The windows are irregularly placed but are distinctive because of the Craftsman style three-over-one double hung wood sash. Both the foundation and chimney, located on the east facade are clad in stone veneer. A recent deck has been added across the facade. The interior of the cottage has five rooms—a living room, kitchen, two bedrooms, and a bath. A large cut stone fireplace is centrally located on the east wall of the living room. The interior displays knotty pine panelling on the walls. The building is noncontributing due to its alterations.

Two cottages were built in the late 1940s and are located to the northwest of the main house across Bluff Street.<sup>9</sup>

Cottage H, non-contributing, was built circa 1948. The cottage is a side gable. It is located across Bluff Street to the northwest. Although not eligible at this time, this cottage may be contributing in the future as it has not been altered and retains a high degree of integrity.

Cottage I, non-contributing, was built circa 1948. The cottage is a side gable. It is located across Bluff Street to the northwest. Although not eligible at this time, this cottage may be contributing in the future as it has not been altered and retains a high degree of integrity.

The Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. The main house would be recognizable to Freeman Thorp as the physical realization of his house design plans. The entire complex would be recognizable to former owners and guests of the Thorp House who enjoyed the design and setting established by Freeman Thorp.

Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages  
Name of Property

Door  
County and State

Wisconsin

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the 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.

### Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Commerce

### Period of Significance

1902-1942 <sup>1</sup>

### Significant Dates

N/A

### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

Thorp, Freeman <sup>2</sup>

### Narrative Statement of Significance

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



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages  
Town of Gibraltar, Door County, WI  
Section 8 Page 1

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### Summary of Significance

The Freeman and Jessie Thorp House and Cottages is locally significant as a representation of the economic success of tourism in the Fish Creek community. Its physical integrity reveals how private residences were constructed and adapted to accommodate the lucrative tourist industry. The property tangibly illustrates individual property adaptation to the development of tourism and is an outstanding example of this type of housing in Fish Creek. The Freeman and Jessie Thorp House and Cottages is therefore eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Commerce. The property's period of significance begins at the date of construction of the house in 1902 through 1942, when the property actively contributed to tourism in Fish Creek during the fifty year historic period.

### Fish Creek Historic Overview

The nominated property is located within the unincorporated village of Fish Creek, in the town of Gibraltar on the western shore of the Door County Peninsula. The village is situated with Green Bay on the north and a rocky bluff on the south.

The village of Fish Creek was first settled by Increase Claflin in 1842 "and prospered on the strength of local timber supplies and a fine harbor."<sup>10</sup> In 1857 Asa Thorp organized Gibraltar Township and platted the village of Fish Creek. The entire peninsula of Door County was isolated until the late 19th century; there were no dependable roads and the railroad did not reach Sturgeon Bay until 1894.<sup>11</sup> Steamers hauled huge shipments between Green Bay and Milwaukee and Chicago. Some of the "boats" could carry 250,000 to 1,500,000 board feet of lumber.<sup>12</sup> The weight of the cargo required several refueling stops. One of these stops was Fish Creek, where visitors extolled the beauties of the area.

By the post-Civil War period, Fish Creek became the major fishing port of Door County. Asa Thorp started to take traveling teamsters and salesmen as paying guests into his private home in the 1860s. By 1870 Fish Creek was a thriving fishing port and lumbering center with two stores, a sawmill, and two large piers. The availability of lumber was good, and substantial quantities of fish, stone, line, and fish barrels accompanied raw timber and cut lumber as exports from the community.<sup>13</sup>

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages  
Town of Gibraltar, Door County, WI  
Section 8 Page 2

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By 1881, Fish Creek could boast four merchants, five pier owners, one blacksmith, one wagonmaker, two hotels and one carpenter.<sup>14</sup> A telephone line between Horseshoe Bay and Fish Creek was completed in 1889.<sup>15</sup> Although difficult times were reported in Door County in 1894,<sup>16</sup> advancements continued as community members donated labor and materials for the construction of sidewalks. Four thousand feet of sidewalks would reach all the stores, churches, public buildings and the principal residential streets.<sup>17</sup> Fortunately for the lagging economy, a prosperous summer resort community providing lodging for a seasonal population was emerging in Fish Creek. Brought by steamship from Chicago, Kenosha, and other western Lake Michigan cities, these new visitors required housing accommodations, and hotels began to spring up in Fish Creek. Asa Thorp, would greatly expand his home, transforming it into a hotel. By the early twentieth century, he could accommodate 125 people.

As soon as dependable transportation came to Fish Creek, so did more seasonal visitors. The year after the railroad reached Sturgeon Bay, the Crundon and Clark families of St. Louis began house construction on Cottage Row, which became the largest enclave of summer homes in Fish Creek.<sup>18</sup> In 1896 Dr. Herman Welcker established Welcker's Resort as a "health spa." In the same year, the permanent population of Fish Creek was 250. By then, the community had a total of three hotels, two general stores, two dry goods purveyors, a meat market, a produce supplier, a farm implement dealer, two milliners, two carpenters, a shoemaker, a cooper, a mason, a barber, a sawmill, a physician, a blacksmith, a livery, and lawyer and a temperance saloon.<sup>19</sup>

In 1902 Freeman Thorp, Asa Thorp's nephew, began construction of the first private home in Fish Creek built to accommodate the seasonal tourist population.

By 1903, the village population had increased to 300. Commercial enterprises had also increased - there were now three general stores, three meat markets, three boat builders, three masons, two blacksmiths, a restaurant, a dentist, a veterinarian, two music teachers, and a string band.<sup>20</sup> In the next two years, Jesse Kinsey Thorp, widow of Freeman Thorp, opened her private residence, the Thorp House, to paying guests. In the future, other homeowners in Fish Creek would follow Jesse Thorp's example and adapt their private homes and properties for commercial use.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages  
Town of Gibraltar, Door County, WI  
Section 8 Page 3

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By 1911, the population had dropped to 200, there were only two hotels, one meat market, and less than half as many miscellaneous professionals.<sup>21</sup> Four years later, however, Welcker's Hotel is listed for the first time in the state gazetteer, along with the Schreiber's hotel, for a total of four hotels in Fish Creek.

The first two decades of the twentieth century were golden years for the resort business in Fish Creek. Summer residents have reminisced about entire summers spent swimming, sailing, playing tennis, and picnicking.<sup>22</sup> By 1917 Welcker's could accommodate 150 guests.<sup>23</sup> There were also five other hotels and resorts in Fish Creek, the majority of which could accommodate over 50 people each.

The great Depression of the 1930s affected Fish Creek in ways similar to the rest of the county. An immediate effect was felt in the resort business and resulted in the revitalization of a Fish Creek tradition evident since Asa Thorp first took travelers into his home in the middle of the 19th Century and Jesse Kinsey Thorp rekindled the practice in the early 20th.

Throughout the 1930s and 1940s a significant number of private residents, either converted, adapted, or moved structures to serve as cottages or cabins on their property for the specific purpose of renting to Fish Creek tourists, apparently in an effort to augment otherwise sagging incomes.<sup>24</sup> Through the 1930s and 1950s the various owners of the Freeman and Jesse Thorp House followed this commercial pattern and built a series tourist cottages on the property to supplement their income.

The development of tourist cottages and cabins benefitted both the owners of these properties and the tourists they served. Due to shrinking incomes of the very wealthy and the growth of a middle class interested in getting a break from everyday life, vacationing was changing from long term seasonal occupancy to short term stays. Small cottages on private property provided an affordable place for a pennywise market to lodge.

Advertisements for these cottage complexes was minimal, and makes documentation difficult. It is not likely that frugal property owners were willing to reduce their additional income by paying for advertising. Most cottage complexes had repeat customers, and developed new

Form 10-900-a  
(Rev. 8-86)  
Wisconsin Word Processing Format  
(Approved 1/92)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages  
Town of Gibraltar, Door County, WI  
Section 8 Page 4

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customers via word of mouth.<sup>25</sup>

From the late 1890s to the Depression of the 1930s, summer visitors had been summer residents and an integral part of the Fish Creek population. Summer residents used services any resident used - although perhaps at an elevated rate of consumption. From the 1930s on, tourism - visitors staying from one night to a few weeks - had greatly increased, resulting in at least eleven complexes comprised of a major building surrounded by smaller cottages. Shorter term vacationers used many of the same services that residents used, but also began to support a wider variety of retail business. By the 1990s, tourism in Fish Creek expanded into the autumn and winter seasons as well, and supports hotels, bed and breakfast establishments, restaurants, clothing stores, gift shops and novelty stores. Economic dependence on tourism has continued to the present day.<sup>26</sup>

### Thorp House History

The nominated property, located on a hillside site three blocks above the waterfront and underneath a bluff, began as the home of Freeman Thorp and his wife Jessie Kinsey Thorp. The Thorp family came from upstate New York, near Oswego. Freeman's grandfather, Truman Thorp, was a lock-tender on the Erie Canal. The family left New York State seeking the promise of new land in the west. By the mid-19th century they were settled in Door County.<sup>27</sup>

Freeman Thorp was born in 1860, the son of Maria Claflin and Jacob Thorp. Freeman's mother was the daughter of Increase Claflin, the area's first white settler. Freeman's father Jacob, along with his uncle Levi, founded the village of Egg Harbor. Asa Thorp, a third brother and also Freeman's uncle, had been one of the first settlers of Door County and was responsible for the platting of Fish Creek Village. Asa Thorp owned much of the land in the village and constructed the first pier in order to dock lake steamers. He was also responsible for opening the first resort hotel in Fish Creek, "The Hotel Thorp."<sup>28</sup>

Freeman Thorp was a boat builder by trade, employed at the L. P. Hill Steamship Company in Fish Creek where he also served as a booking agent for the company.<sup>29</sup> He probably learned his boat-building craft from a folk tradition passed down through generations<sup>30</sup> and adapted these designs and building skills to his house construction. In 1900, Freeman began

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages  
Town of Gibraltar, Door County, WI  
Section 8 Page 5

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planning his house at 4135 Bluff Street when he was forty years old.

In 1902<sup>31</sup> Freeman Thorp began the construction of his new home for himself and his new wife Jessie Kinsey with three goals in mind; they were: (1) to provide a commodious home for his family, (2) to exhibit his building skills, and (3) to open up the home to friends and tourists who stayed the summer in Fish Creek. Thus, from this initial design conception, he envisioned a house that would have income-producing potential. Freeman and Jessie chose a tract of land for their house a few blocks from the center of the town, just under a high bluff over-looking the harbor. The land they purchased was part of the original 1858 land grant that Freeman's uncle Asa Thorp received from President Buchanan.<sup>32</sup>

After the first floor of his house was almost completed, Freeman Thorp boarded the steamer called the *Erie L. Hackley*, and left for Menominee, Michigan, located on the north side of Green Bay. In Menominee he picked-up more supplies for the second story of his house. He was never to return, for on October 3, 1903, the *Hackley* ran into a storm with gale-force winds. The storm over-turned the ship, which subsequently split. Of the nineteen passengers on board, only eight survived. Freeman Thorp was not among them. His body was discovered the next day on "Hat Island," several miles off the coast of Fish Creek in Green Bay, where he apparently died of exposure. The now widowed Jessie Thorp continued her husband's plans for the house and had the upstairs completed with the intention of renting rooms to guests.<sup>33</sup>

As a result of Freeman's fortuitous income-producing plans, Jessie was able to retain the house by renting the upstairs bedrooms. With the residence completed, Freeman Thorp's goals were realized. The house provided a commodious living space for his wife and also produced a steady income for her.<sup>34</sup>

When, in the mid-1910s, Jessie Kinsey Thorp's mother become ill, Jessie moved into her mother's home. She rented the Thorp House to Max Schmidt of Chicago who used the home as a summer residence. In 1932 Jessie Thorp died and the house was sold to Elmer and Esther Anderson in 1936.

The Andersons were the first owners to build cottages on the property, constructing five cottages on the east side. (cottages A-E) The Andersons renamed their cottage resort "Cedar

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages  
Town of Gibraltar, Door County, WI  
Section 8 Page 6

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Ridge.” In 1942 Elmer and Esther Anderson sold the upper half of their property to Ida Anderson (no relation). From 1942 through 1950, Ida Anderson and her nephew built four more cottages on the west side (cottages F-I) and renamed the property “Ida Anderson’s Breezy Hill Lodge”

In 1974 Ida Anderson sold her property to Neil W. Kinsey and Selma A. Kinsey, relatives of the original owner Jessie Kinsey Thorp. The Kinsey family kept the property, renamed it the “Heritage” and used it as a summer residence. In 1982 the property was sold to Richard and Carol Skare who used it to house the employees who worked at their restaurant, “The Cookery.” In 1986 the upper portion (the south end) of the property above Bluff Street was sold to Christine and Sverre Falk-Pedersen, the present owners. They renamed the main house and cottage complex the “Thorp House Inn” and today run the establishment as a bed and breakfast inn.<sup>35</sup>

### Historic Significance

The Freeman and Jessie Thorp House and Cottages is locally significant for its historic associations with the theme of commerce, playing an important role in the commercial development of Fish Creek. The house, built as a private residence with income producing potential, served as a model for residents of Fish Creek. In its construction, the Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages established that a private home and property were potential income producing assets in a resort community and foreshadowed Fish Creek's Depression-era building pattern of private home adaptation and conversion to cottage and cabin complexes. The Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages remain the best and most intact example of this private home/cottage and cabin combination in Fish Creek.

As previously stated, Fish Creek transformed itself from a lumbering and fishing village into a tourist community in the last quarter of the 19th century. By virtue of its fine harbor, steamships made refueling stops in Fish Creek and the area became known for its natural beauty. From the beginning, Fish Creek's tourist industry was dependent upon commercial enterprise, first through the shipping industry which initially brought the tourists and then through the Fish Creek residents who accommodated them once they arrived.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages  
Town of Gibraltar, Door County, WI  
Section 8 Page 7

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At the turn of the century, new hotels began to appear on the Fish Creek landscape. Asa Thorp, Freeman Thorp's uncle, converted his home, initially accommodating teamsters and salesmen, into a thriving hotel where he could accommodate 125 people. Dr. Herman Welcker built "Welcker's Resort" and called it a health spa; there he could accommodate 150 people. Tourism grew to such an extent that by 1917 there were six hotels and resorts in Fish Creek, all in an unincorporated village of 200 residents. During the tourist season Fish Creek's population tripled.<sup>36</sup>

Bolstered by the success of the hotel and resort establishments in Fish Creek and the increasing seasonal population, Freeman Thorp built his own house with extra bedrooms for paying guests and situated the house on Bluff Street near private residences, one block away from the commercial center of the village. In so doing, he was the first known homeowner in Fish Creek to construct his private residence for commercial profit, providing an economic model of private home adaptation to tourism in Fish Creek.

The attractive setting of the Thorp House on a bluff overlooking Green Bay, near other private residences, coupled with its close proximity to the commercial center of the village uniquely provided a setting that, unlike Fish Creek's other resorts and small hotels, bridged the private home to the commercial hostelry.

When the Depression hit Fish Creek in the 1930s, a significant number of homeowners either constructed, converted, adapted or moved structures on their property for the specific purpose of renting to tourists. The new owners of the Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages, the Andersons, built, over the years, nine ancillary cottages to supplement their various incomes. Other residents made similar alterations to their properties. The Kinseys converted a garage to a summer rental dwelling and moved a cottage to their property at 4148 Main Street. The Stenzels built a series of ancillary cottages around the main house of their property at 9435 Spruce Street.

However, the Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages stand out above these and all other examples of house and cottage complexes in Fish Creek because its physical integrity conveys a building pattern predicated on the supply and demand of commerce in the local village economy. The Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages remain the best and

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(Rev. 8-86)  
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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages  
Town of Gibraltar, Door County, WI  
Section 8 Page 8

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most intact representation of the house and cottage/cabin complexes in Fish Creek, illustrating individual property adaptation to the development of tourism. Because of its association with the development of Fish Creek's tourist economy, the Freeman and Jessie Thorp House and Cottages is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Commerce.

Although the Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages has undergone some changes over time, the original feeling and purpose of the property remains intact. It is an excellent example of tourist-related housing in Fish Creek. Because of its physical integrity, early construction date and historic presence, the Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages remain the most outstanding representation of private home adaptation to the development of tourism in Fish Creek today.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages  
Town of Gibraltar, Door County, WI  
Section 8 Page 2

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FOOTNOTES

1. (The house and cottages were constructed over a long range time period) Lauren Mittermann, "A History of the Thorp House Inn," Door County Almanak No. 5, The Dragonsbreath Press, Sister Bay, Wisconsin, 1990, 196-9.
2. Ibid., 197.
3. Ibid.
4. Conversation with Sverre and Christine Falk-Pedersen, current owners of the Thorp House, November 19, 1993.
5. Ibid.
6. Mittermann, 199
7. Falk-Pedersen
8. Mittermann, 199
9. Conversation with Sverre and Christine Falk-Pedersen, November 20, 1993, current owners of the Thorp House. They were told of these dates from previous owners.
10. Edward Schreiber, "Fish Creek Then and Now," Fish Creek Voices, an Oral History of a Door County Village, William Caxton, LTD., Sister Bay, Wisconsin, 1990, 5.
11. John Enigl, "Old R. R. Depot Has Seen Lots of History," Door County Almanak No. The Dragonsbreath Press, Sister Bay, Wisconsin, 1990, 151.
12. Barbara Wyatt, Project Director, Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin: Vol. 2, A Manual for Historic Properties, Madison, Wisconsin: Historic Preservation Division, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986, Industry 16-1, 4-1.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages  
Town of Gibraltar, Door County, WI  
Section 8 Page 10

13. The Advocate, Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, 4/25/1870, p. 2; The Advocate, Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, 2/21/1887. p. 2.
14. Chas. I. Martin, History of Door County, Wisconsin, together with biographies of nearly seven hundred families and mention of 900 persons, Expositor Job Print, Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, 188, p. 185.
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16. The Advocate, Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, 4/14/1894, p. 2.
17. The Advocate, Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, 2/17/1894, p.3.
18. Hjalmar R. Holand, History of Door County, Wisconsin, the County Beautiful, The S.J. Clarke publishing Company: Chicago, 1917, 360; Door County Almanak No. 5: Tourism, Resorts, Transportation, Sister Bay, Wisconsin: The Dragonsbreath Press, 1990.
19. Polk's Wisconsin State Gazetteer and Business Directory, 1895-96, R. I. Polk and Company, Chicago, 1895, p.315.
20. Polk's Gazetteer, 1903-04, p. 365-66.
21. Polk's Gazetteer, 1911-12, p. 330.
22. Betsy Guenzel, Fish Creek, The Summertime, privately printed, 1991.
23. "The Summer Resort Business," Door County Almanak No. 5, The Dragonsbreath Press, Sister Bay, Wisconsin, 1990, 19.
24. Rebecca Sample Bernstein, Intensive Architectural and Historical Survey of Fish Creek, Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin: Historical Preservation Division, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, February, 1993, 30.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages  
Town of Gibraltar, Door County, WI  
Section 8 Page 11

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25. Rebecca Sample Bernstein interviews with Fish Creek residents Chris Falk-Pedersen, Virginia Kinsey, 1993-1996.
  26. Harwood W. Hill, "Transportation Conquers Distance," Door County Almanak No. 5, The Dragonsbreath Press, Sister Bay, Wisconsin, 1990, 134-6.
  27. Edward Schreiber, "Fish Creek Then and Now," Fish Creek Voices, an Oral History of a Door County Village, Wm. Caxton, LTD., Sister Bay, Wisconsin, 1990, 5.
  28. Mittermann, 197. Harwood W. Hill, "Transportation Conquers Distance," Door County Almanak No. 5, The Dragonsbreath Press, Sister Bay, Wisconsin, 1990, 134-6.
  29. Gibraltar Historical Association, Fish Creek, WI, "L. P. Steamship Company advertisement and schedule for the ship Cecilia Hill," Fish Creek, Wisconsin, 1897.
  30. Conversation with Ann Thorp, local Fish Creek historian, November 19, 1993.
  31. Mittermann, 196-7. Duncan Thorp, "The Hotel Thorp" Door County Almanak No. 5, The Dragonsbreath Press, Sister Bay, Wisconsin, 1990, 47. Duncan Thorp, "The Thorp Family," Fish Creek Voices, an Oral History of a Door County Village, Wm. Caxton, LTD., Sister Bay, Wisconsin, 1990, 189-95.
  32. Property Abstract, in possession of current owners.
  33. Mittermann, 196-7
  34. Ibid, 198-9.
  35. Property Abstract., Mittermann, 199-200.
  36. "The Summer Resort Business," Door County Almanak No. 5, The Dragonsbreath Press, Sister Bay, Wisconsin, 1990, 19. Polk's Wisconsin State Gazetteer and Business Directory, 1917-18, R. I. Polk and Company, Chicago, 1918, p. 451.

Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages  
Name of Property

Door  
County and State

Wisconsin

## 9. Major Bibliographic References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

### Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #\_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #\_\_\_\_\_

### Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

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## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1 acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 1/6 4/8/0/7/8/0 4/9/9/6/8/4/0  
Zone Easting Northing

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

See Continuation Sheet

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Sarah Davis McBride	date	12/26/97
organization		telephone	(608) 264-6488
street & number	220 Sinclair St.	zip code	53545
city or town	Janesville	state	Wisconsin

Form 10-900-a  
(Rev. 8-86)  
Wisconsin Word Processing Format  
(Approved 1/92)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages  
Town of Gibraltar, Door County, WI  
Section 2 Page 1

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Form 10-900-a  
(Rev. 8-86)  
Wisconsin Word Processing Format  
(Approved 1/92)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages  
Town of Gibraltar, Door County, WI  
Section 9 Page 2

---

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Form 10-900-a  
(Rev. 8-86)  
Wisconsin Word Processing Format  
(Approved 1/92)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages  
Town of Gibraltar, Door County, WI  
Section 10 Page 1

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## 10. Geographical Data

### Verbal Boundary Description

All of Lot Two, Block One of Alexander Noble's Addition to the Village of Fish Creek and the southwest corner of Lot One, Block Three of Brown's Addition.

### Verbal Boundary Justification

The boundary of the property includes all existing buildings that have a historical relationship with the main house.

Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages

Door

Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

**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 SHPO or FPO.)

<b>name/title</b>	Sverre and Christine Falck-Pedersen		
<b>organization</b>		<b>date</b>	12/26/96
<b>street&amp;number</b>	4135 Bluff Street	<b>telephone</b>	(414) 868-2141
<b>city or town</b>	Fish Creek	<b>state</b>	Wisconsin
		<b>zip code</b>	54212

**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 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 Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.



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(Rev. 8-86)  
Wisconsin Word Processing Format  
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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages  
Town of Gibraltar, Door County, WI  
Section Additional Property Owners Page 1

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Additional Owners

Cottages H and I

Richard and Carol Skare  
P. O. Box 376  
Fish Creek, Wisconsin  
54212

Tel: 414-839-2266

Form 10-900-a  
(Rev. 8-86)  
Wisconsin Word Processing Format  
(Approved 1/92)

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National Park Service  
**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages  
Town of Gibraltar, Door County, WI  
Section Photographs Page 1

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Photographic Labels

Photo 1 of 16  
Thorp, Freeman and Jessie House and Cottages  
Fish Creek, Door County, Wisconsin  
Photographer: Sarah Davis McBride  
November 19, 1993  
Negative: Wisconsin State Historical Society  
Main house facade, view looking south

[The same information applies to the following labels except where specified]

Photo 2 of 16  
Gable detail, Main house, view looking south

Photo 3 of 16  
East elevation of Main house, view looking southwest

Photo 4 of 16  
Photographer: Rebecca Sample Bernstein  
West elevation of Main house showing rear addition, view looking east

Photo 5 of 16  
Southwest corner of Main house facade, view looking southeast

Photo 6 of 16  
Interior parlor of Main house

Photo 7 of 16  
Interior stairway of Main house

Photo 8 of 16  
Interior bedroom of Main house

Form 10-900-a  
(Rev. 8-86)  
Wisconsin Word Processing Format  
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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Freeman and Jesse Thorp House and Cottages  
Town of Gibraltar, Door County, WI  
Section Photographs Page 2

---

Photo 9 of 16  
The Freeman and Jessie Thorp House and Cottages complex, view looking south

Photo 10 of 16  
Photographer: Rebecca Sample Bernstein  
Cottage A, view looking east

Photo 11 of 16  
Cottage B, view looking southeast

Photo 12 of 16  
Cottage C, view looking east

Photo 13 of 16  
Cottage D, view looking south

Photo 14 of 16  
Cottage E, view looking south

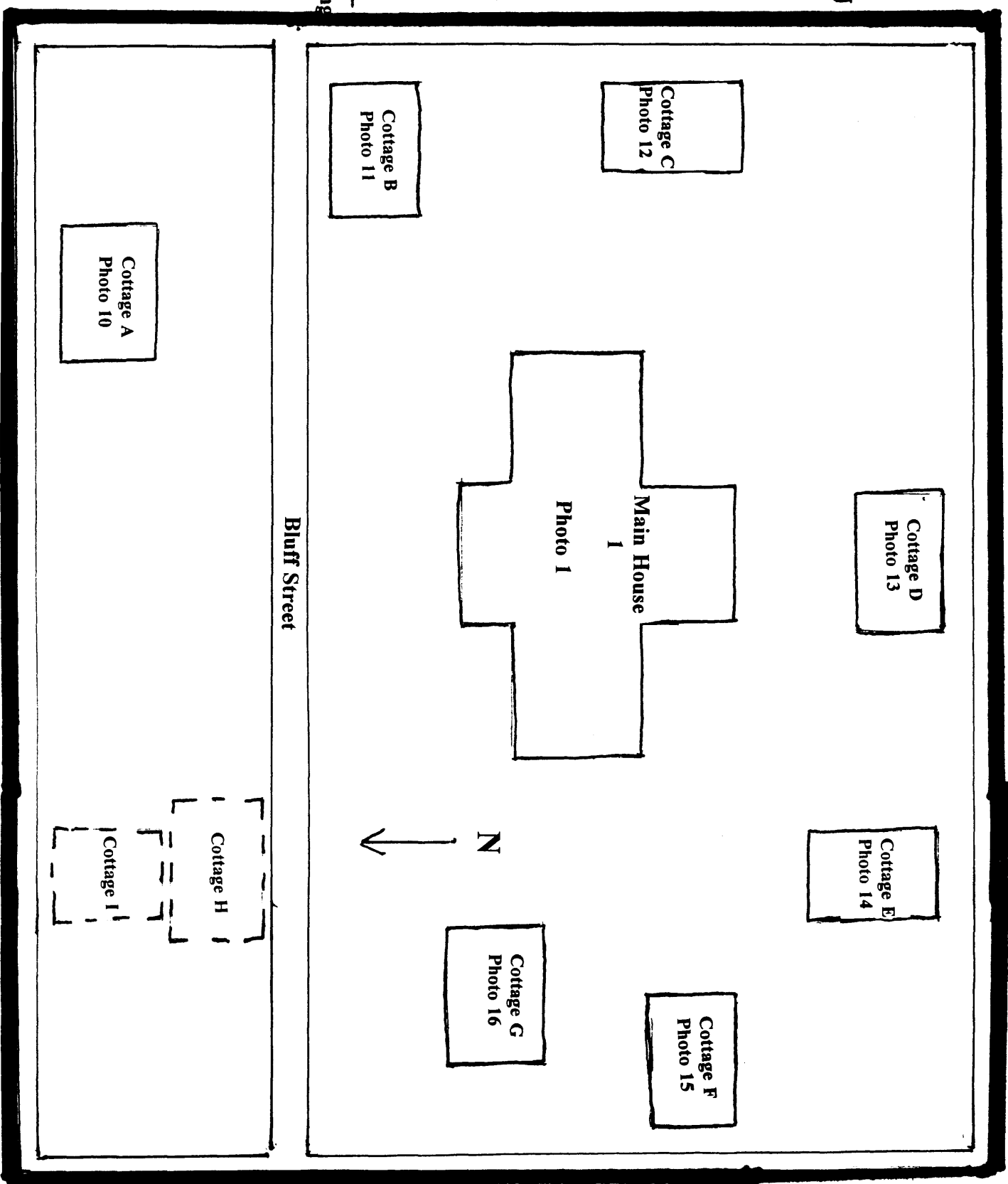
Photo 15 of 16  
Cottage F, view looking southwest

Photo 16 of 16  
Cottage G, view looking southwest

THE FREEMAN AND JESSIE THORP HOUSE AND COTTAGES  
Fish Creek, Door County, Wisconsin

NOT TO SCALE

SKETCH MAP



Boundary of Complex

Contributing

Boundary of Contributing

Bluff Street

N