

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED **MAY 20 1980**

DATE ENTERED

JUL 3 1980

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

"Snowflake" Bentley House

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

SE of Jericho on

Nashville Road

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Jericho

VICINITY OF

Vermont

STATE

Vermont

CODE

50

COUNTY

Chittenden

CODE

007

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

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Diane & John Shullenberger

STREET & NUMBER

R.R. 1, Box 102

CITY, TOWN

Jericho

VICINITY OF

STATE

Vermont

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Office of the Town Clerk

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Jericho

STATE

Vermont

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Vermont Historic Sites and Structures Survey

DATE

April 1977

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

CITY, TOWN

Montpelier

STATE

Vermont

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

CHECK ONE

CHECK ONE

EXCELLENT

DETERIORATED

UNALTERED

ORIGINAL SITE

GOOD

RUINS

ALTERED

MOVED DATE _____

FAIR

UNEXPOSED

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The 'Snowflake' Bentley House has a 2½-story gabled main block flanked by two 1½-story gabled wings. It is clapboarded and exhibits an asphalt shingle roof and a granite block foundation.

The central mass of the structure has a gable-front orientation. It is three bays wide, with three 2/2 windows with peaked lintels on the first and second floors and a triangular blind opening in the apex of the gable. The latter is ornamented with a tin snowflake, one of a series of snowflake decorations added to the former east wing porch by Wilson Bentley. It symbolizes his pioneering research on snow crystals. The east side of the main block has a 1-story polygonal bay window with paneled base and molded frieze and an Italianate door with two tall arched panels.

Plain cornerboards and a simple fascia frame the main block. The lack of cornice returns indicates that the house was probably built c. 1860, when the Greek Revival style was on the wane in Vermont.

The east wing appears to be original to the house, giving it an Italianate plan when first constructed. Like the main block, the wing exhibits 2/2 windows with peaked lintels, a plain fascia and an Italianate door. The central steeply pitched wall dormer indicates a Gothic Revival influence, and is typical of Vermont architecture of the period. Originally, an open 1-story porch with chamfered posts spanned the front facade of the wing. A balustrade composed of turned balusters ran along the porch roof, forming a balcony which was entered from a door in the wall dormer. A row of tin snowflakes ornamented the skirt below the porch floor.

The west wing was added to the house c. 1887. Its central steeply pitched wall dormer and detailing echo the design of the east wing, although the west wing is longer than the east wing. A 1-story porch with clapboarded porch wall spans the facade. The original porch configuration included a steeply pitched shed roof with a central balcony entered from a door in the wall dormer and vergeboard trim below the eaves. The wing now exhibits a central chimney, but originally had an interior end chimney, like the one on the east wing. The interior surface of the door exhibits a series of small primitive landscape paintings done by Wilson Bentley's brother, Charles, including two panels which depict the house and its surrounding environment.

A 1½-story, gable-roofed addition on the rear of the main block served as Wilson Bentley's photographic studio.¹ Constructed of horizontal planks and sheathed in clapboards, the addition exhibits a door on the east side which has a five-light transom and peaked lintel. There is a plank door in the apex of the rear gable. The rear wing appears to have been constructed in two sections, and post-dates the construction of the house.

The Bentley farm once included several large barns and an earlier farmhouse across the road. These buildings have since been destroyed. A clapboarded two-car garage is located northwest of the house.

¹ Interview with Diane Shullenberger, owner. February 26, 1980.

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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES ca. 1860

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of the "Snowflake" Bentley House lies primarily in its association with its distinguished former owner, Wilson Alwyn Bentley. A 1916 history of the town states: "Jericho, Vermont has one industry, if such it may be called, that gives it a unique place and that has carried the name of the town all over the world."¹ That "industry" was Bentley's pioneering work on snow crystals and the preservation of their fleeting beauty through the use of micro-photography.

Born February 9, 1865, Wilson Bentley exhibited a passionate interest in snow crystals early in his life. As a child, he drew pictures of snowflakes as seen under a crude microscope given to him by his mother. For his 17th birthday, his parents presented him with a tripod camera and microscope, and after two years of perfecting his photomicrograph technique, he produced the first photograph of a magnified image of a snow crystal. In his lifetime, he made over 5,300 photomicrographs of snowflakes, which were sought after by nearly every university in the country, for teaching purposes, and by many artists, jewelers, engravers, architects and silk and² glass manufacturers for the artistic inspiration the unique crystal designs afforded. "Tiffany's of New York bought³ two hundred of [the photomicrographs] and made beautiful pendants and brooches", based on their designs.

Jericho was an ideal location for Bentley's studies on snow crystals during the winter months. In addition to his photomicrographs, he photographed hoarfrost, window frost, ice and ice crystals. In warmer weather, he turned his attention to the study of clouds, raindrops and dew, producing beautiful photographs of water droplets on field weeds, insects, spider webs, etc. His images were artistically, as well as scientifically advanced. He invented a method of casting raindrop impressions in flour, which is still used by students today.

Bentley was a self-taught scientist, artist and writer. He lectured to laypersons and professional scientists, many of whom had far more formal education than Bentley, who had only attended the local public schools. His articles, illustrated with handsome photomicrographs, were published in journals and newspapers, including Appleton's Popular Scientific Monthly (where his first article was published in 1898), Harper's, The New York Times (which carried on Page One the news of Bentley's discovery of 100

¹Hayden, Chauncey H. et al., The History of Jericho, Vermont, Free Press Printing Company, Burlington, 1916.

²Stoddard, Gloria May, Snowflake Bentley: Man of Science, Man of God, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1979, page 19.

³Ibid.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Continuation Sheet 9-1

UTM NOT VERIFIED

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 4[±] acres

QUADRANGLE NAME Richmond, VT

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 18 664500 4923750
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary coincides with the property lines of the current owners of the house, Diane and John Shullenberger. The deed describing the land is in Vol. 58, Pgs. 423-33, Jerico Land Records. (see phone report of 6/26/80).

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

Nancy E. Boone, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Division for Historic Preservation

DATE

March 1980

STREET & NUMBER

Pavilion Building

TELEPHONE

802-828-3226

CITY OR TOWN

Montpelier

STATE

Vermont

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

William B. Timney

TITLE Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

(he signed on May 12, 1980 - see phone report of 6/26/80)

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Kenn A. Berbe

DATE

July 3, 1980

BY Kenn A. Berbe
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: *Patricia Andrews*
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE

6/30/80

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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Continuation sheet 8-2

Item number 8

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new snow crystal designs in one two-day blizzard in 1928), National Geographic, and the American Annual of Photography. He also wrote numerous monographs for the U.S. Weather Bureau, and in 1924, received the first research grant ever given by the American Meteorological Society. A book of his photomicrographs, Snow Crystals, was published in early December of 1931, the fulfillment of an elusive dream for Bentley.

One night shortly thereafter, Bentley walked home from a lecture, six miles through a raging blizzard. Friends had tried to persuade him to spend the night in town, but he was insistent on getting home so as not to miss the potential discoveries in the night's storm. On December 23, Wilson "Snowflake" Bentley died of pneumonia. The Burlington Daily News commented on his passing: "Bentley found the good, the true and the beautiful in a Vermont snowbank and the world called him its greatest expert and exponent of snowflakes."⁴

"Snowflake" Bentley's grandfather, Shelly Bentley, was one of the first settlers of Jericho. By the time of Wilson's birth, his parents, Thomas E. and Fanny Colton Bentley, had settled on the Old Andrew Warner farm in the Nashville section of town. Here, Wilson Bentley was to spend his entire life.

In addition to his recording of scientific phenomena, Bentley's work in photography has left a valuable record of the evolution of the Bentley House. Bentley lived and worked in the east side of the present house. The western wing was added to the original house c. 1887. After their father's death in that year, Wilson and his brother, Charles, constructed the wing to house Charles' family, while Wilson and his mother remained in the other side of the house. Wilson never married.

Anyone seeking "Snowflake" Bentley's home around the turn of the century would surely have chosen the correct house along Nashville Road, for on the skirt of the east wing porch was displayed a row of white tin snowflakes. (One tin ornament is still extant, and is displayed in the gable window on the main block of the house.) Large wooden snowflakes decorated the doors of the barn across the street which has since been destroyed.

The "Snowflake" Bentley House is a simple Vermont farmhouse. It derives its significance from Wilson Alwyn Bentley and the pioneering work on snowflake crystals which he carried out there.

The boundary of the nominated property coincides with the property lines of the current owners of the house, Diane and John Shullenberger.

⁴Burlington Daily News, December 26, 1931, page 4.

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Continuation sheet 9-1

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Page 1

1. Carlisle, Lillian Baker, ed., Look Around Jericho, Underhill and Westford, Vermont, Chittenden County Historical Society, Burlington, Vermont, 1972.
2. Hapgood, Fred, "When Ice Crystals Fall From the Sky, Art Meets Science", Smithsonian, Volume 6, Number 10, 1976, pp. 66-73.
3. Hayden, Chauncey H. et al., The History of Jericho, Vermont, Free Press Printing Company, Burlington, 1916.
4. Loveland, Lillian S., "Bentley, The 'Snow Crystal Man'", Vermont, Volume 27, 1922, pp. 272-274.
5. Marquis, Albert Nelson, ed., Who's Who in New England, A. N. Marquis and Company, Chicago, 1909.
6. Merle, Elinor I.S., The History of Jericho, Vermont, Volume 2, The Town of Jericho, Queen City Printers, Burlington, Vermont, c. 1963.
7. Orton, Vrest, "Snowflake Bentley", Vermont Life, Volume 2, Number 2, Winter 1947-48, pp. 10-13.
8. Stoddard, Gloria May, Snowflake Bentley: Man of Science, Man of God, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1979.
9. 1763-1913. Souvenir Program of the Town Celebration August 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 1913, Jericho, Vermont, Roscoe, Essex Junction, Vermont, 1913.
10. Burlington Daily News, December 26, 1931, page 4.

Photographs

Prints made from W. A. Bentley slides by Mary G. Lighthall, The Lighthall Darkroom, Charlotte, Vermont, 1978. In the collection of the Vermont Historical Society.

Maps

F. W. Beers, Atlas of Chittenden County, 1869. Reprinted by Charles E. Tuttle Company, Rutland, Vermont, 1971.

H. F. Walling, Map of Chittenden County, Vermont, Boston, New York, Baker Tilden and Company, 1857.