

STATE:
Massachusetts
COUNTY:
Berkshire
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK) Type all entries complete applicable sections

1. NAME

COMMON: "Chesterwood"

AND/OR HISTORIC: Daniel Chester French Home and Studio, "Chesterwood",
Marshall Warner Farm

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: Williamsville Road

CITY OR TOWN: Stockbridge CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: First

STATE: Massachusetts CODE: 025 COUNTY: Berkshire CODE: 003

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Pork <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: National Trust for Historic Preservation

STREET AND NUMBER: 740-748 Jackson Place NW

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: D.C. CODE: 11

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Berkshire County Registry of Deeds, Middle District

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Pittsfield STATE: Massachusetts CODE: 025

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: None

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered minor	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

"Chesterwood", the summer studio and residence of Daniel Chester French, lies north of Monument Mountain and the Housatonic River about two miles west of the center of Stockbridge, Massachusetts. Of the 150 acre farm which French purchased from Marshall Warner in 1896, some 129.02 acres remain intact. Approximately 2/3 of this "Chesterwood" property, including the studio, residence, and an exhibition gallery (originally a barn), lies north of Williamsville Road; the remaining 1/3, including a caretaker's residence and a second studio, lies south of Williamsville Road.

French's studio, designed by Henry Bacon, was constructed in 1897. Its wooden frame is covered with stucco in which marble and coal chips were mixed to provide texture. The major element in the studio is the workroom, a 30-foot cube with a peaked ceiling broken by a northern skylight. Adjacent to the workroom on the west is a small casting room with a chute to the cellar for dumping plaster and refuse. Attached to the southern side of the studio is a 50-foot veranda with a flat roof supported on Doric columns; reached by 3 risers at either end, it offers a sweeping view of the nearby river and the mountain beyond. On the north side of the studio is a one-story reception area with piano, fireplace and library where French rested and entertained his frequent visitors. From this area, double French doors lead to a terraced garden with a fountain designed by Bacon and embellished by French.

Two unusual features of the studio are the 30-foot-high double doors in the west wall of the workroom and the revolving modeling table mounted on a flatcar on a short section of standard gauge railroad track that leads outdoors. The doors were constructed to accommodate the first statue that French executed in the new studio--an equestrian figure of George Washington holding a raised sword, now on the Place d'Éna in Paris. The statue measures 30 feet from the horse's hoof to the sword tip. The movable modeling table allowed French to roll his work outside to study the effects of natural lighting.

In 1901, French replaced the original Warner farmhouse (c. 1820) with an imposing 2½ story Georgian Revival residence, also designed by Henry Bacon. The house stands to the east of the studio (see Map A, Site Plan, attached) and, like it, is covered with stucco studded with marble and coal chips. The hipped roof, surmounted by a balustrade, is broken by 2 gabled dormers on the front (south) slope, 3 on the rear. A broad terrace runs across the front of the rectangular (5-bay) main block and the square (3-bay) wing to the east. At either end of the house are one-story porches above which are open decks surrounded by balustrades. The sitting room in the house is a replica of the "best" parlor in the French family homestead at Chester, New Hampshire. The paneling, doors, and mantle used in the sculptor's study were taken from the Warner house.

The 150-year-old barn which stands north-northeast of the house is an original part of the working farm which French purchased, constructed of hugh chestnut beams and vertical siding. In 1962, it was remodeled for use

(Continued)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1896-1931**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The noted sculptor Daniel Chester French gave America two of its best known statues, the "Minute Man" at Concord, Massachusetts, and the heroic figure of Abraham Lincoln in the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. Both works are singularly appropriate for the United States, the "Minute Man" commemorating the rallying of Americans to the cause of liberty and the "Lincoln" honoring the remarkable man who brought full freedom and dignity to the individual in America.

French is said to have remarked to a visitor to his summer home, "I live here six months of the year--in heaven. The other six months I live, well--in New York." The idyllic setting to which French referred, 150 acres in the Berkshire Hills near Stockbridge, Massachusetts, was "Chesterwood", the studio and summer home where he worked for more than three decades. Of the farm which French purchased in 1896, some 129.02 acres remain intact. The 2½ story Georgian Revival residence, designed by Henry Bacon and erected in 1901, is basically as it was when French lived there. The studio, also designed by Bacon and constructed in 1897, presents the sculptor's working environment with materials, notebooks, and tools. The sketches, plaster casts, and bronze models, including the "Minute Man" and the "Seated Lincoln", which are housed in the studio and the nearby exhibition gallery represent the most complete collection of examples of French's work in the world.

79.10 acres of the "Chesterwood" property, including the studio and exhibition gallery, are now owned by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and open to the public (group appointment basis during May and October; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily, Memorial Day weekend through September 31). The remaining 49.92 acres, including the residence, are part of the estate of French's daughter, Margaret French Cresson, and will become the property of the National Trust following probate of Mrs. Cresson's will.

Biography

Daniel Chester French, who was born at Exeter, New Hampshire, on April 20, 1850, exhibited little early evidence of artistic talent. Not until he was 19, then living in Concord, Massachusetts, did he begin to sculpt, first using modeling tools loaned to him by Miss Mary Alcott, daughter of Bronson Alcott and the Amy of Little Women. French's family encouraged his early efforts. Recognizing his need for instruction, the young man

(Continued)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Caffin, Charles A. American Masters of Sculpture (New York, 1903).
 "Chesterwood", brochure prepared by National Trust for Historic Preservation
 (n.p., n.d.).
 Cresson, Margaret French. Journey Into Fame (Cambridge, Mass., 1947).
 Taft, Lorando. The History of American Sculpture (New York, 1930).

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	UTM 18.635090	4683110				
NE	18.636100	4683200				
SE	18.636130	4681960				
SW	18.635130	4682020				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 129.02

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Polly M. Rettig, Historian, Landmark Review Project; original
 form prepared by S. S. Bradford, Historian, 9/10/62

ORGANIZATION: Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service
 DATE: 12/11/74

STREET AND NUMBER:
 1100 L Street NW.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington
 STATE: D.C.
 CODE: 11

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name _____
 (NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

Title _____

Date _____
 (NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

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

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
 Designated: _____
 (NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS) date

ATTEST: _____
 Chief, Div. of Arch. Surveys

Keeper of the National Register
 Date _____

Director, OAH
 Date _____

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

7. Description: (1)

"Chesterwood"

as an exhibition gallery; the immediate grounds were landscaped at the same time. North of the barn, beyond a one-story, open wood shed (now a crafts area) is a replica of French's Standing Lincoln (1912) in Lincoln, Nebraska, erected in 1966.

The caretaker's residence, located southeast of the house across Williamsville Road, is also an original part of the Warner farm. Built c. 1860 and added to c. 1920, it is a 2-story frame and shingle structure with a gabled roof and an attached garage. Further south and almost completely screened from the road by trees is the second studio, a frame and clapboard structure with a northern skylight. French built this smaller studio c. 1911 and retreated here when numerous guests disturbed his work at the main studio.

Boundary

The Landmark designation for "Chesterwood" covers 129.02 acres in eight parcels, five now owned by the National Trust for Historic Preservation (numbers 19, 19.01, 19.02, 22, and 23) and three bequeathed to the National Trust from the estate of Margaret French Cresson (numbers 10, 22, and 23); specific boundaries for the Landmark are indicated in red on Map B, General Area Plan, attached.

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(Number all entries)

8. Statement of Significance: (1) "Chesterwood"

studied briefly with John Quincy Adams Ward, a leading American sculptor of the period, in Boston. His progress was such that by 1870 he had sold his first piece, a bas-relief.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, a family friend, helped French obtain his first major commission, the "Minute Man", to be erected at the North Bridge for the centennial of the Concord Fight. The Town of Concord accepted French's design for the work in March, 1873. Though unknown and relatively inexperienced, he created one of the most famous American statues ever made. As models, the sculptor used himself, a cast of the "Apollo Belvedere", and his father's hired man. Brass from melted-down cannon was used to cast the statue, which was unveiled on April 19, 1875.

French remained remarkably personal in all of his work, despite his study abroad. He was in Italy when the "Minute Man" was unveiled. There he became more familiar with many of the techniques of sculpture, such as marble cutting, the making of plaster casts, and the construction of armatures, but he escaped becoming an adherent of any particular style. French did produce a "Sleeping Endymion" which reflected the classical style (and showed a serious lack of imagination), but he apparently recognized the falseness of the work and thereafter followed his own taste.

In 1876, French returned to America and over the next 20 years maintained studios in Washington, D.C., Concord, Massachusetts, and New York City. After marrying his cousin Mary Adams French in 1888, he spent winters in New York City and several summers with Augustus Saint-Faudens at his studio in Cornish, New Hampshire.

On a carriage trip through the Housatonic River Valley in 1896, French and his wife were shown the Marshall Warner farm near Stockbridge, Massachusetts, as a possible summer home. The view from the property of the Housatonic River and Monument Mountain beyond had earlier been described by Matthew Arnold as "beautiful and soul-satisfying". French purchased the farm, which he named "Chesterwood", and the following year began construction of a summer studio designed by his friend Henry Bacon. In 1901, French replaced the Warner farmhouse (c. 1820) with an imposing 2½ story Georgian Revival residence, also designed by Bacon.

Once the "Minute Man" had become well known, French never lacked commissions. Some of his best work was executed for various people in his adopted state, Massachusetts. He produced a bust of Ralph Waldo Emerson in 1879 that won the praise of the subject. His statue of John Harvard, unveiled at Harvard College in 1884, exhibited the growing power of the sculptor. What some regard as French's best work, his Milmore memorial, was created after the death of a young sculptor whom he had known. French had long considered the treatment of death, and in this memorial he shows the angel of death staying the hand of a young sculptor as he shapes his stone. The memorial represents

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(NATIONAL HISTORIC
LANDMARKS)

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8. Statement of Significance: (2)

"Chesterwood"

the tragic death of the young man in a sensitive and poignant fashion, and in doing so reflects the humanity of its creator. French's regard for life is also shown in his "Flanders Fields", a World War I memorial in Milton, Massachusetts. As Margaret French Cresson writes in Journey Into Fame, her biography of her father:

For the life of him,...(French) could not do a war memorial that bespoke only victory. To him war was the supreme tragedy and every way in which he approached it brought out,..., the pain and sense of loss.

During the 1890's, French began to collaborate with architects. An early example of this collaboration was his colossal statue, the "Republic," for the Columbian exposition in Chicago in 1893. This gigantic piece stood sixty-four feet high and served as the dominant inspirational and physical feature of the fair. Subsequently, French became associated with Charles F. McKim, a leading architect, and collaborated with him in many instances. French's "Alma Mater," in front of Low Memorial Library at Columbia University, is a fine example of a statue that holds a cardinal position in an architectural composition.

In 1913, Henry Bacon was selected as the architect for the Lincoln Memorial, Washington, D.C., and French was chosen to model the heroic figure of Lincoln. The sculptor's experiments with the statue, originally intended to be 10 feet high, showed that it would be dwarfed and out of scale in the massive hall that Bacon had conceived. Accordingly, French revised his plan and nearly doubled the statue to its present dimensions. The largest stone statue cut in America, measuring 4,360 cubic feet of Georgia white marble, it was unveiled on May 30, 1922. French's triumph is attested to by the fact that when mention is made of the Lincoln Memorial, one immediately thinks of the forceful but contemplative statue, not the striking building in which it sits.

Daniel Chester French died in 1931 and the next year "Chesterwood" became the property of his daughter Margaret French Cresson. Mrs. Cresson subsequently formed the Daniel Chester French Foundation, to which she transferred ownership of the studio and 79.1 acres of land. After a brief period of administration by the Trustees of Reservations, this property was acquired by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1968. The house and the remaining acreage, which Mrs. Cresson retained until her death in 1974, will be added to the National Trust's holdings upon probate of her will.