

Captain Israel Richardson's Tavern
9 The Green
Woodstock
Windsor County
Vermont

HABS No. V7-29

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

CAPTAIN ISRAEL RICHARDSON'S TAVERN

Street Address: 9 The Green, Woodstock, Windsor County, Vermont

Present Owner: Mrs. Norman Williams, 9 The Green, Woodstock, Vermont

Present Occupant: Same

Present Use: Residence

Brief Statement of Significance: Built originally as a tavern, this is one of the oldest buildings surviving in Woodstock, and the oldest surviving large building.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: Original owner and builder was Captain Israel Richardson, who sold it to Charles Marsh and Jesse Williams in 1796, who sold to Moses Barnet and Elmer Darbe some time before 1822. It has been in the present family for many years.
2. Date of erection: 1787
3. Architect, builder, suppliers, etc.: Local
4. Original plans, construction, etc.: Unknown
5. Notes on alterations and additions: "... erected by Captain Richardson in 1787 and first located in the Park (i.e. the present Green). After being removed to its present site, when the common was enlarged (i.e. 1793), it was sold by Capt. Richardson to Charles Marsh and Jesse Williams in 1796 and by them to Moses Barnet and Elmer Darbe. It was painted red, and for some years was used for a tavern and store together, and then as a tavern exclusively till about the year 1822 (The Woodstock Observer, Jan. 5, 1822), when it was turned into a dwelling house." (Henry Swan Dana, A History of Woodstock, Vermont, Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Boston and New York, 1889, p. 154) The original front block of the house has had two large ells added to either back corner, extending far to the rear forming a U shape, with the right ell being considerably longer than the left. Various alterations have been done to the interior during various redeco-rating campaigns, making it extremely difficult to attribute dates to the various interior elements, although much that survives is apparently from early periods of the house. The exterior of the original front block preserves its original appearance.

6. References: Henry Swan Dana, A History of Woodstock, Vermont, Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Boston and New York, 1889, pp. 154 et al.
Herbert Wheaton Congdon, Old Vermont Houses, Stephen Daye Press, Brattleboro, 1940, pp. 43-45, fig. 25.
Dorothy and Richard Pratt, A Guide to Early American Homes, North, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1956, p. 82.
Old Buildings Project of the Robert Hull Fleming Museum at the University of Vermont, Burlington, 1937-1938.
Mrs. J. Peter Gratiot, Otis Hill Farm, Woodstock, Vermont.
Mrs. Norman Williams, 9 The Green, Woodstock, Vermont.
- B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure: Captain Israel Richardson, the original owner of the house, was a locally prominent businessman and served as Town Selectman 1785-1787. Charles Marsh (1765-1849), who bought the building with Jesse Williams in 1796, was a lawyer, graduate of Dartmouth College 1786, Vermont District Attorney 1797, Trustee of Dartmouth College 1809-1849, and elected to the U. S. Congress, 1814.

Prepared by Osmund R. Overby
November 1959

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

- A. General Statement:
1. Architectural character: H. W. Congdon, on page 48 of Old Vermont Houses (Stephen Daye Press, Brattleboro), cites this exterior as an exceptionally good example of the beauty of the simple, unadorned, typical Vermont farm house achieved through the subtly balanced proportions and the refinements of the various parts of the building.
 2. Condition of fabric: Maintained in good condition.
- B. Technical Description of Exterior:
1. Overall dimensions: Two-and-a-half stories, plus cellar. Front, center block approximately 35' x 30' plus two ells extending to the rear from either back corner in a lopsided U shape, the right (East) ell extending approximately 100' plus a greenhouse at the end, the left (West) ell extending approximately 40'.
 2. Foundations: Original timber frame set up on log cellar walls. Remainder of foundations are stone.

3. Wall construction: Hewn timber frame with clapboards. The clapboards, which are spaced very close at the bottom of the wall, are gradually given greater exposure toward the top of the wall.
4. Porches, stoops, bulkheads, etc.: No information
5. Chimneys: Three chimneys, including original massive central chimney in front block of the house.
6. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Six panel, sidelighted front door with sunburst shutter pattern over. Paneled, sidelighted side door, originally a second principal entrance, now unused.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Twelve light over twelve light double hung windows with fixed slat shutters.
7. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: Gable roof, wood shingles.
 - b. Cornice, eaves: Simple, boxed, moulded eaves with fine scale dentil course.

C. Technical Description of Interiors:

1. Floor plans: Central chimney type plan with principal rooms to either side, greatly extended with two large ells containing extra parlors, dining room, kitchens, laundry, sheds, garage, etc. Open U shaped rear stair in location of original kitchen at the rear side of the central chimney. Front stairway in front entrance hall at the front side of the central chimney. Bedrooms with sitting rooms toward the front on second floor.
2. Wall and ceiling finish: Plastered, papered walls. Plastered ceilings. Second floor framing members exposed in ceiling of southwest parlor on first floor.
3. Doorways and doors: Four and six panel doors on interior.
4. Trim: Original trim - simple moulded wood. More fully ornamented trim, wainscoting, paneling and cabinet work apparently from various later periods.
5. Hardware: Some original wrought-iron hardware remains.
6. Lighting: Electric

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7. Heating: Central heating, plus original fireplace.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: House faces south on a narrow lot on the Town Green extending about 200 feet to the rear of the house, where it borders on the Ottaquechee River.
2. Enclosures: White picket fence across front.
3. Outbuildings: Included in right rear ell - sheds, garage.
4. Walks, driveways, etc.: Gravel driveway.
5. Landscaping, gardens, etc.: Informal - lawn, trees, shrubs, flowers.

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