

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Vermont
COUNTY:	Caledonia
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	JUN 25 1974

1. NAME

COMMON:
Railroad Street Historic District

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
For boundary description, see Section 7: of Railroad Street

CITY OR TOWN: St. Johnsbury

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: Vermont District

STATE: Vermont

CODE: 50

COUNTY: Caledonia

CODE: 005

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Multiple ownership

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE: Vermont

CODE:

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Office of Town Clerk

STREET AND NUMBER: 36 Main Street

CITY OR TOWN: St. Johnsbury

STATE: Vermont

CODE: 50

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Vermont Historic Sites and Structures Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1974

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Vermont Division of Historic Sites

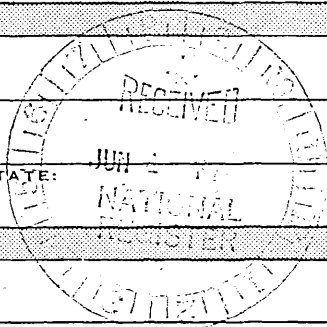
STREET AND NUMBER: Pavilion Building

CITY OR TOWN: Montpelier

STATE: Vermont

CODE: 50

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



STATE: Vermont

COUNTY: Caledonia

ENTRY NUMBER: JUN 25 1974

DATE:

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" 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	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Boundary Description

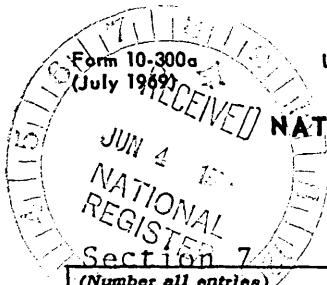
The boundary of the Railroad Street Historic District begins at Point A at the intersection of the centerlines of Railroad Street and the south driveway to the CP Rail Depot, and proceeds easterly to Point B at the CP Rail track; then northerly along the CP Rail track to Point C at the intersection of the line of the north wall of the Drouin Building; then westerly along the line of the north wall of the Drouin Building to Point D at the centerline of Railroad Street; then southerly along the centerline of Railroad Street to Point E at the intersection of the line of the north wall of the New Avenue Hotel; then along the north and west wall lines of the New Avenue Hotel to Point F at the centerline of Eastern Avenue; then easterly along the centerline of Eastern Avenue to Point G at the intersection of the centerline of Railroad Street; and then southerly along the centerline of Railroad Street to the point of beginning (Point A).

General Description

The Railroad Street Historic District consists of six principal buildings and the Depot Square park. The buildings include the CP Rail Depot, the Citizens Savings Bank Building, the Merchants National Bank Building, the Caldbeck Building, the Drouin Building, and the New Avenue Hotel. The CP Rail Depot stands in the southeast quadrant of the district on the east side of the Depot Square park off the south side of Bay Street. To the north across Bay Street, four other buildings (the Citizens Savings Bank, Merchants National Bank, Caldbeck, and Drouin Buildings) form a row fronting on the east side of Railroad Street. On the opposite (west) side of Railroad Street, the New Avenue Hotel stands on the corner of Eastern Avenue in the northwest quadrant of the district. Diagonally across the intersection, the Depot Square park occupies a rectangular area along the east side of Railroad Street.

The six buildings were constructed during the last quarter of the 19th century to form a commercial district related to the railroad. The depot, which predates the other buildings in the district, is executed in a vernacular Chateausque style. The five commercial buildings display marked architectural similarities, being designed in a modified Richardson Romanesque style. The six buildings are constructed of brick and share similar ornamental forms (e.g., denticulated cornices, arcaded upper windows, and stone lintels and sills). These cohesive qualities, together with nearly uniform scale, unite the buildings into an integral district.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



Form 10-300a
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

(Continuation Sheet) 1

STATE	
Vermont	
COUNTY	
Caledonia	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	JUN 25 1974

Descriptions of Individual Buildings

(1) CP Rail Depot

The CP Rail Depot has a rectangular plan, with dimensions of 39 feet (east-west) by 116 feet (north-south). The depot is built of brick, and rests on a foundation of cut stone. It stands two-and-one-half stories high, with a central block (containing the waiting room on the first floor) which rises slightly higher than the symmetrical side blocks. At the center of the east (trackside) elevation, a one-story office bay for the station agent projects from the wall to provide visibility along the track.

Across the west (main) and east (trackside) elevations, the building has thirteen bays, five of which are in the central block and four in each of the side blocks. The north and south (side) elevations have four bays each. On the first story, the fenestration maintains a uniform line across each elevation; on the second story, the fenestration of the central block occupies a line above that of the side blocks. The windows in the first story have flat rusticated stone lintels; those in the second story are surmounted by segmental brick arches painted gray.

The building has a hip roof intersected by a perpendicular gable roof at its north and south sides. The central section of the hip roof is raised. A hipped dormer is centered over each of the four elevations. The gable ends and dormers are sheathed with wood shingles hung in alternate rows with staggered butts. The roof is covered with slate shingles. One interior chimney projects from the southwest slope of the roof. Metal finials rise from each peak of the roof.

The depot has been altered somewhat from its original appearance. A large portico with a shed roof which protected the main (west) entrance has been removed. The south end of the first floor has been converted into storage space for track maintenance crews, and a large door has been cut into the wall of both the east and west elevations to provide outside access. Two interior chimneys have been removed. Ornamental metalwork, which originally lined the entire roof ridge, remains only on the ridge over the south side block of the building. In 1900 a wood gabled platform shed was attached to the trackside elevation; subsequently it has been demolished.¹

1. Edward T. Fairbanks, The Town of St. Johnsbury Vt., The Cowles Press, St. Johnsbury, Vt., 1914, p. 262.

(continued on Continuation Sheet #2)

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

(Continuation Sheet) 2

STATE	
Vermont	
COUNTY	
Caledonia	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	JUN 25 1974

Section 7

(Number all entries)

(2) Citizens Savings Bank Building

The Citizens Savings Bank and Trust Company Building stands on a sloping site which gives it four stories on the west (Railroad Street) elevation and five stories on the south and east (Bay Street) elevations. Built of brick, the building is polygonal in plan, conforming to the layout of the enclosing streets. The south-east corner of the building is rounded and the southwest corner is diagonal. The building rests on a foundation of cut stone.

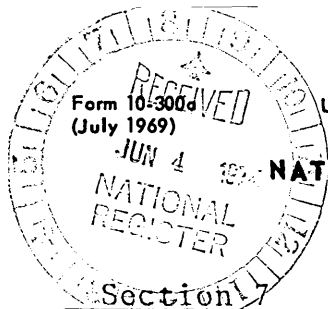
The first story of the main (west) elevation has a round-arched entrance bay flanked by massive brick pilasters and large display windows. The upper three stories are divided into four bays containing windows grouped in alternating pairs and triplets. Foliated terra cotta panels adorn the spandrels between the second and third stories. The bay over the principal entrance to the building contains recessed oriel windows on the second and third stories. The fourth story is marked by an arcade of smaller recessed windows. This arch motif is repeated on the corbeled arcaded cornice which projects from the flat roof.

On the first story of the diagonal southwest corner of the building is the original arched entrance to the bank, flanked by brick pilasters with terra cotta capitals. The doorway has been converted to a window with the removal of the entrance to the adjoining bay on the west elevation. The second story has an arched window, above which a foliated terra cotta panel covers the spandrel. The third story has a pair of windows, and the fourth story a single arched window.

The south elevation, the other main public facade of the building, repeats essentially the rhythm and articulation of the main elevation.

Lambert Packard designed the Citizens Bank Building to match his contiguous Merchants National Bank Building. Completed in 1894, the Citizens Bank Building was gutted by fire in 1909. The shell of the structure withstood the fire, and the interior was rebuilt the same year¹ with Lucius L. Bridge serving as architect.

1. Edward T. Fairbanks, The Town of St Johnsbury Vt, The Cowles Press, St. Johnsbury, Vt., 1914, p. 459.



Form 10-300a
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

(Continuation Sheet) 3

STATE Vermont	
COUNTY Caledonia	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
JUN 25 1974	

(Number 311 entries)

(3) Merchants National Bank Building

The Merchants National Bank Building adjoins the Citizens Bank Building on the north. It was built in 1893, only a few months earlier than the Citizens Bank Building. Lambert Packard used the same design in both buildings, repeating the alternating bays, terra cotta paneled spandrels, and arcaded fourth floor and cornice.

Also built of brick, the Merchants Bank Building has a rectangular plan. Although it has the same depth as the Citizens Bank Building, it is narrower than the latter. Its west elevation has three bays, the outer two of which have triplet windows. The central bay (above the arched main entrance) has recessed oriel windows on the second and third stories, and a pair of windows on the fourth story.

(4) Caldbeck Building

The Caldbeck Building adjoins the Merchants Bank Building on the north. Also built in 1893 of brick, it stands only three stories high, interrupting the cornice line of the adjoining bank buildings. The Caldbeck Building has a rectangular plan, with three bays across the main (west) elevation separated by brick pilasters. Each bay contains triplet windows, except for the central bay on the second story where a niche with a small statue replaces the middle window.

The building shares elements of the design of the bank buildings, articulated in slightly different detail. The three first floor store fronts are separated by posts faced with smooth stone and surmounted by metal panels (added during this century). The windows on the second story have segmental brick arches in contrast to the flat arches on the bank buildings. The third story windows have round arches which emulate the fourth story windows on the bank buildings; however, rusticated granite keystones and impost blocks distinguish the design from that of the latter buildings. The corbeled cornice follows the arcaded pattern of the bank buildings.

(5) Drouin Building

The Drouin Building (Daniels Building) adjoins the Caldbeck Building on the north. Also built of brick on a rectangular plan, the Drouin Building stands four stories high, re-establishing the cornice line of the bank buildings to the south. The building, which was also completed in 1893, reproduces essentially the de-

(continued on Continuation Sheet #4)

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

STATE	
Vermont	
COUNTY	
Caledonia	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	JUN 25 1974

Section 7

(Continuation Sheet) 4

(Number all entries)

sign of the bank buildings, lacking only some of their decorative features. The architect, however, is unknown.

The Drouin Building has five bays across the west elevation, the outer four of which contain triplet windows. The central bay contains a single window where originally a small balcony was attached to each story. The three first floor store fronts have plate glass display windows surmounted by metal sheathing (added during this century). The second and third story bays are outlined on the sides and tops by quoins of lighter-colored brick to give a polychrome effect. The arcaded windows of the fourth story are highlighted by lighter-colored brick used in the arches.

(6) New Avenue Hotel

The New Avenue Hotel (originally the Avenue House) stands across Railroad Street from the four previously described commercial buildings. It was built by B. G. Howe in 1896-97, and has an L-shaped plan fronting both on Railroad Street and Eastern Avenue. The building has four stories to balance the commercial row across the street. At the southeast corner (at the corner of Railroad Street and Eastern Avenue), the hotel has its main entrance through a semi-cylindrical tower about 30 feet in diameter which is recessed into the building.

The first story of the building contains several store fronts, most of which have been later sheathed with metal sheeting above and between large plate glass display windows. The ground floor of the tower, which contains the main entrance to the hotel, is divided by four cast-iron pilasters infilled with plate glass windows.

The windows in the three upper stories (excepting the tower) are separated into bays of four windows each by plain brick pilasters. The second and third story bays have rectangular windows with continuous stone sills and lintels. Recessed brick panels occupy the spandrels between the second and third and fourth stories. Longer panels are located along the frieze. The windows in the fourth story (except those in the tower and west annex) are arcaded. The central bay of the east (Railroad Street) elevation contains a recessed oriel window.

The perimeter of the flat roof has a bracketed cornice over each principal elevation and stone coping over the central tower and west annex. Originally the entrance tower rose an additional

(continued on Continuation Sheet #5)

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

STATE	Vermont	
COUNTY	Caledonia	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER		DATE
	JUN 25	1974

Section 7

(Continuation Sheet)

5

(Number all entries)

story, which was surmounted by a bracketed cornice and a conical roof. During the 1950's, the fifth story of the tower was removed, leaving the tower with a flat roof at the line of the main roof.

(7) Depot Square Park

The Depot Square park occupies the sloping area between the CP Rail Depot and the east side of Railroad Street. The rectangular park provides a central public open space for the district, enhancing its visual character with the natural forms and colors of vegetation.



6. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input 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) Buildings constructed 1883-97

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 type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Railroad Street Historic District in St. Johnsbury, Vermont contains the principal buildings of a commercial center developed at the height of the railroad expansionist period during the late 19th century. Focused on the railroad depot and its square, the banks, stores, and hotel of the district provided essential commercial services to the flourishing industrial town of St. Johnsbury, which depended on the railroad for its vitality.

The substantial scale and ornate design of the buildings demonstrate the prosperity and civic pride of the period. The Railroad Street Historic District constitutes an almost completely intact architectural record of the direct physical relationship between commerce and transport in their late 19th century forms.

With the extensive construction of railroads through northern Vermont during the latter 19th century, St. Johnsbury became an important railroad center. The town stands at the junction of north-south and east-west lines which connect southern New England with Quebec and western Vermont with Maine. The present depot was built in 1883 to serve as the union station for the Connecticut and Passumpsic Rivers Railroad (the north-south line) and the St. Johnsbury and Lake Champlain Railroad (the east-west line). The principal Boston-to-Montreal passenger train of the period (the so-called Air Line express) passed through St. Johnsbury on the Connecticut and Passumpsic Rivers Railroad.¹

The other principal buildings in the Railroad Street Historic District date from the last decade of the 19th century. After a catastrophic fire in 1892 along the east side of Railroad Street,² the row of four contiguous buildings (the Citizens Savings Bank, the Merchants National Bank, the Caldbeck, and the Drouin Buildings) was rebuilt during a two-year period. In 1896

1. Lowell Smith, One Hundred Fifty Years of Progress - St. Johnsbury Vermont, The Cowles Press, St. Johnsbury, Vt., 1937, p. 69.

2. Edward T. Fairbanks, The Town of St. Johnsbury Vt., The Cowles Press, St. Johnsbury, Vt., 1914, p. 523.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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

(Continuation Sheet)

6

STATE	Vermont	
COUNTY	Caledonia	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER		DATE
		JUN 25 1974

Section 8
(Number all entries)

another fire destroyed the Avenue House hotel across the street,¹ enabling the construction of the larger and more elegant present building (now the New Avenue Hotel). Both in architectural quality and scale, these buildings mark the culmination of commercial development along the lower main street of St. Johnsbury.

The productive skill of one architect, Lambert Packard, contributed decisively to the architectural development of St. Johnsbury during the last third of the 19th century.² Together with numerous other public and private buildings in the town, Packard designed at least two of the buildings within the Railroad Street Historic District - the Citizens Savings Bank and Merchants National Bank Buildings. Packard was clearly influenced by Henry Hobson Richardson, and designed both bank buildings in a modified Richardson Romanesque style.

Two other buildings in the same row, the Caldbeck and Drouin Buildings, emulate the ornamental design of the Packard buildings. The other commercial building in the district, the New Avenue Hotel, also displays similarity to the basic elements of the Packard design. The district, therefore, possesses an uncommonly homogeneous architectural character.

Changes in railroad ownership and operation have exerted considerable effect on the Railroad Street district. Control of the north-south line passed to the Boston and Maine Railroad in 1887 and subsequently in 1926 to the Canadian Pacific Railroad. Toward the middle of the present century, the volume of rail traffic declined with increasing competition from highway transport. The Boston-to-Montreal passenger trains were the last to operate through St. Johnsbury, until they were abandoned in 1964. The Canadian Pacific (now CP Rail) still uses the depot for its freight agency; however, the future use of the building is uncertain.

Concurrently with the decreasing importance of rail travel to the town, the Railroad Street district declined in commercial importance. Reflecting the economic trend, the buildings of the district have received less sympathetic maintenance in recent years and have lost some of their decorative features. Nevertheless, they remain basically sound, and constitute the core of possible future re-development in that part of St. Johnsbury.

1. Edward T. Fairbanks, The Town of St Johnsbury Vt, The Cowles Press, St. Johnsbury, Vt., 1914, p. 524.

2. Arthur F. Stone (comp.), St. Johnsbury Illustrated,

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Fairbanks, Edward T., The Town of St Johnsbury Vt, The Cowles Press, St. Johnsbury, Vt., 1914.
 Smith, Lowell, One Hundred Fifty Years of Progress - St. Johnsbury Vermont, The Cowles Press, St. Johnsbury, Vt., 1937.
 Stone, Arthur F. (comp), St. Johnsbury Illustrated, Caledonian Press - C. M. Stone and Co., St. Johnsbury, Vt., 1891.
 Miscellaneous photographs, Vermont Historical Society, Montpelier, Vermont, file: "St. Johnsbury".
St. Johnsbury (Vt.) Caledonian, various issues, 1883-1909.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

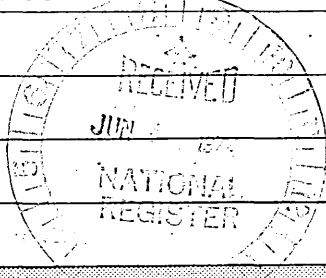
LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES							
CORNER	LATITUDE				LATITUDE			LONGITUDE				
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds			
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"	44	25	01	72	01	00
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"						
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"						
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"						

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1922320
CD

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: five acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Hugh H. Henry, Historic Sites Researcher

ORGANIZATION: Vermont Division of Historic Sites DATE: 5/31/74

STREET AND NUMBER:
Pavilion Building

CITY OR TOWN: Montpelier STATE: Vermont CODE: 50

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 William B. Pomeroy

Title Director of Historic Sites
State Historic Preservation
Officer

Date 5/31/74

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

A. B. [Signature]
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 6/25/74

ATTEST:

Charles [Signature]
 Keeper of The National Register

Date 6/21/74