

Listed on State Register
VT ACHP
Date: 5-7-80

STATE OF VERMONT
Division of Historic Sites
Montpelier, VT 05602

HISTORIC SITES & STRUCTURES SURVEY
Individual Structure Survey Form

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| COUNTY: | Rutland |
| TOWN: | Clarendon (Clarendon Village) |
| LOCATION: | Middle Road Clarendon Village |
| FUNCTIONAL TYPE: | Residential |
| COMMON NAME: | Powers House |
| OWNER: | Russell Powers |
| ADDRESS: | Clarendon, Vermont |
| ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> |
| LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: | Local <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National <input type="checkbox"/> |
| DATE BUILT: | 1823 |

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Structural System

1. Foundation: Brick ☐ Stone ☒ Concrete ☐ Concrete Block ☐
2. Wall Structure
 - a. Wood Frame: Balloon ☐ Western Platform ☐ Post & Beam ☐
 - b. Load Bearing Masonry: Brick ☒ Stone ☐ Concrete ☐
Concrete Block ☐
 - c. Iron ☐
 - d. Steel ☐
 - e. Other: ☐
3. Wall Covering: Clapboard ☐ Wood Shingle ☐ Board & Batten ☐
Shiplap ☐ Novelty ☐ Stucco ☐ Tile ☐ Brick ☒ Stone ☐
Slate ☐ Sheet Metal ☐ Asphalt Shingle ☐ Aluminum ☐
4. Roof Structure
 - a. Truss: Wood ☒ Iron ☐ Steel ☐ Concrete ☐
 - b. Vault: Brick ☐ Stone ☐ Concrete ☐
 - c. Other: ☐
5. Roof Covering: Wood Shingle ☐ Asphalt Shingle ☐ Tile ☐
Slate ☒ Sheet Metal ☐ Paper ☐ Built Up ☐ Rolled ☐
6. Engineering Structure: ☐
7. Other: ☐

Appendages: Porches ☒ Towers ☐ Dormers ☐ Bay Windows ☐ Ells ☒
Chimneys ☒ Cupolas ☐ Wings ☐ Sheds ☐ Other: ☐

Number of Stories: $2\frac{1}{2}$

Approximate Dimensions: 35' x 30' (main block)

Roof Style: Gable ☒ Gambrel ☐ Flat ☐ Shed ☐ Hip ☐ Mansard ☐
Jerkinhead ☐ Monitor ☐ Saw Tooth ☐ Other: ☐

With Belcast ☐ With Parapet ☐ With False Front ☐

THREAT TO STRUCTURE:

No Threat ☒ Zoning ☐ Roads ☐
Development ☐ Deterioration ☐
Other: ☐

SURVEY NUMBER:

1105-4

NEGATIVE FILE NUMBER:

76-A-90

UTM REFERENCES

| | | |
|------|---------|----------|
| 18 | 665960 | 4820840 |
| Zone | Easting | Northing |

U.S.G.S. QUAD. MAP:

Rutland Quad., 7.5' Series

PRESENT FORMAL NAME:

Nicholas M. Powers House

ORIGINAL FORMAL NAME:

PRESENT USE: Dwelling

ORIGINAL USE: Farmhouse

ARCHITECT/ENGINEER:

BUILDER/CONTRACTOR:

PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE:

Excellent ☐ Good ☒
Fair ☐ Deteriorated ☐

THEME:

STYLE: Federal/Italianate

LOCAL ATTITUDES:

Positive ☐ Negative ☐ Mixed ☐
Other: ☐

ADDITIONAL ARCHITECTURAL OR STRUCTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Five-bay facade with center entrance. Flemish bond brickwork and shallow brick arcading in the front and side elevations with three-centered arches; wider span in the center bay of the facade. Louvered fanlight over door, three-quarter length sidelights. Rectangular wood lintels. Circa 1870 remodeling by Nicholas M. Powers includes paired eaves brackets, gable-roofed ell constructed of bricks from the nearby Caleb Hall tavern, bracketed wood side porch at west wall, and, most likely, the 2/2 sash. Wood-frame sheds attached at rear.

RELATED STRUCTURES:

See below.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

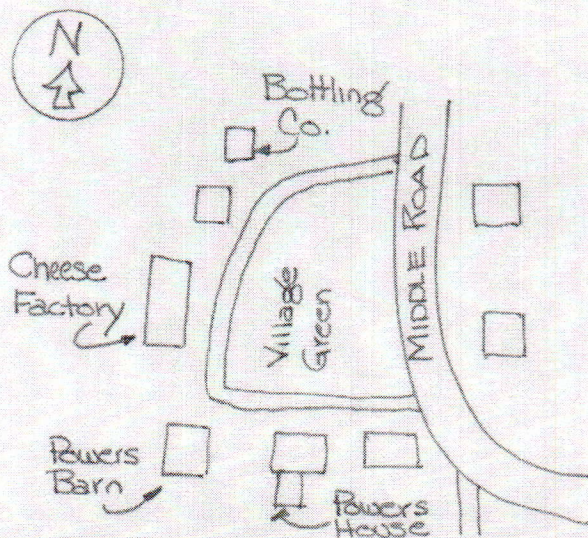
The Powers House, a brick Federal-style house remodeled in the 1870's, occupies a key position at the south edge of the village green. While the house is of architectural distinction, its major significance is derived from its association with Nicholas Montgomery Powers (1817-1897), a nationally prominent covered bridge builder.

At the height of his career in the 1850's and 60's Powers was awarded contracts for bridges in Maryland, New York State and Maine, as well as Vermont. He was born in Tinmouth and served an apprenticeship under Abraham Owen, a master bridge builder in Pittsford. Although his first bridge (1837) at Pittsford Mills is no longer standing, the Gorham Bridge (1841) in Pittsford and Mead Bridge (1840) at Proctor, built in collaboration with Owen, remain from his early work in the Pittsford area.

In the 1850's Powers moved to Clarendon. During this period he began the series of bridges, beginning with a long span over the Connecticut River at Bellows Falls, that established his reputation as a master of wooden bridge construction. Powers' major contracts included a bridge at North Blenheim, New York, said to be the longest existing covered bridge in the world, and a two-level railroad bridge at Perrysville, Maryland. Powers also served as Superintendent for Roads at the Rutland Railroad and built an early engine house and turntable at the line's Rutland headquarters.

Sometime after the Civil War Powers returned to Clarendon. In 1869 he bought the brick house on the village green from A. J. Newton, a local cattle dealer. He gradually built up extensive land holdings in the area and established a prosperous farm. In his later years, Powers continued to build bridges (Continued)

MAP: (Indicate North In Circle)



SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:

Open Land ☒ Woodland ☐
Scattered Buildings ☐
Moderately Built Up ☒
Densely Built Up ☐
Residential ☒ Commercial ☐
Agricultural ☒ Industrial ☐
Other: Village Green

RECORDED BY:

Kathlyn Hatch

ORGANIZATION:

VT Division for Historic Preservation

DATE RECORDED:

5-76

HISTORIC SITES & STRUCTURES SURVEY

Survey Number: 1105-4 - Continued

in Rutland and Clarendon, returning to the simple Town lattice truss frame he had learned in Pittsford. Powers took on several other projects as well, including erecting a new steeple for the Clarendon Congregational Church, and rebuilding the tower of the Rutland County Courthouse. He worked for the marble industry in the West Rutland area, building the wood shoring for the Sheldon Quarry and designing an early wood-frame derrick.

Powers erected several buildings on the family property in Clarendon, including a barn (ca. 1860's) and cheese factory (ca. 1870's). The former bottling factory, located at the western end of the village green, was built by his son. The family residence and farm is currently owned by Powers' greatgrandson.

References

Herbert Wheaton Congdon. The Covered Bridge (Stephen Daye Press, 1941).

R. S. Allen. Covered Bridges of the Northeast (Stephen Greene Press, 1957).

Russell Powers, Clarendon Village.